DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 349 196 SO 022 046

AUTHOR Shah, Madhuri, Ed.
TITLE Without Women No Development: Selected Case Studies from Asia of Non-Formal Education for Women.
INSTITUTION Commonwealth Secretariat, London (England).
REPORT NO ISBN-0-85092-283-6
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 155p.
AVAILABLE FROM Commonwealth Secretariat Publications, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, England, United Kingdom (4 British pounds).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Case Studies; *Developing Nations; Economic Development; Educational Planning; Educational Policy; Family Planning; Foreign Countries; Leadership Training; *Nonformal Education; Rural Development; *Womens Education
IDENTIFIERS Bangladesh; India; Malaysia; Sri Lanka

ABSTRACT

This handbook presents 15 case studies on the non-formal education of women from four Asian countries: India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia. The goal of this publication is to provide information about education-related issues concerning women and girls and development. This information is intended for those people, in governmental and non-governmental agencies, who are concerned with the planning and administration of non-formal education programs. The case studies afford a variety of experiences in operating such programs for women, under different cultural, political, ethnic, and social conditions. The case studies are organized into sections by country with each section accompanied by an introduction that highlights the points of the case studies of the region. The types of programs discussed include family planning, leadership training, self-reliance training, and rural development projects. (DB)

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Without Women No Development

Selected Case Studies from Asia of Non-Formal Education for Women

Compiled and edited by
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Marlborough House
Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX

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Copies may be purchased from:

Commonwealth Secretariat Publications
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX

ISBN 0 85092 283 6

Price: £4.00

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Preface

The Pan-Commonwealth Specialist Conference on Non Formal Education for Development held in New Delhi in February 1979 set in motion a series of projects on different aspects of non formal education in the Commonwealth. The vital significance of women in development was recognised by the establishment in 1980 of the Women and Development Programme in the Commonwealth Secretariat with a brief to support the efforts of governments to enhance women's role in development through improving employment opportunities and training.

The present study is one in a series of several undertaken by the Education Programme to provide information about education-related issues concerning women and girls and development. It presents a sobering picture from Bangladesh, India, Malaysia and Sri Lanka of the difficulties faced by women in development, but it offers considerable encouragement in its account of what can be achieved by women when given the opportunity.

The case studies were collected and edited by Dr. Madhuri Shah, Chairman of the India University Grants Commission and former Vice-Chancellor of the Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University, Bombay. We are most grateful for her work on this collection since she has been able to show even in this tiny sample something of the immense contribution that women make to development worldwide, giving substance to the claims of the book's title "Without Women, No Development."

Peter R. C. Williams
Director
Education Programme
Human Resource Development Group

Prologue

WHAT EDUCATION MEANS FOR ME

The name of my village is Ghani. It is 10 km west of Kharwara in Rajasthan. The population of this village is about 2500, which includes different castes of people. Only a few in my village are rich people; all the rest earn their livelihood through farming or manual labour. I too belong to a poor farming Rajput family and my father owns only one *bigha* (half an acre) of land. My father works as messenger (*chaprasi*) in the village *panchayat*. My younger brother works as a domestic help in Ahmedabad in a rich businessman's house. During most of the year, my mother and myself work as labourers. Looking at our situation, we can say that without manual labour, it would be difficult for us to make ends meet.

It has been a tradition in our area not to send girls to school and also not to allow women to talk and mix with people. In the old days, the women had to remain veiled, and any kind of outside influence on them was unthinkable. Gradually, with the passage of time, the traditions are slowly changing. But it was because of the traditions that I was deprived of studies. Seeing my other friends going to school, I often wondered at my fate. Was I letting a beautiful opportunity go past? I used to blame my parents for this but after all they were also helpless in the face of social circumstances.

At this moment of regret, the Seva Mandir Institution was opened as an adult education centre in my village. I still feared opposition from my parents and they did object. A teacher of the centre, Mrs Chandrakanta Devi, would come to my house every day to persuade my father to let me study, telling him that there was no harm in doing so, but he would always say,"What will my community think of me sending a *girl* to study?" In the meanwhile, without the knowledge of my parents, I would go to the centre along with my friends. Whenever my father heard of my going to the centre he would scold me; despite this, my interest in studies kept growing. Slowly my parents understood the importance of literacy. I learned not only to write my name but other things too. I would meet the teacher of the centre in the afternoon at her shop and gradually started to sew there.

My friends also faced the same problem in the beginning, but being together, we gained a degree of courage and confidence in ourselves, and slowly even the parents agreed to send them to the literacy centre. At the centre we got the opportunity to meet and talk to other people and gained some knowledge of the outside world. Whenever an outsider came to the centre and asked us questions, we were very scared and apprehensive about answering. Even some people of the village did not stop at making fun of us and would say, "So you are this," and I would answer back. Whoever got an answer from me would not have the courage to tease me the next time!

Seva Mandir often organised cultural programmes and, with my colleagues, I would enthusiastically participate in them. Whenever I got the time I told my neighbourhood women to study too. But being older than I, they would not give serious thought to it; still I was not discouraged. With the close cooperation of my friends I continued to study, sew and embroider. With the help of Seva Mandir I went to Udaipur for training and learned about the nutritional value of food. Going outside the village also gave me a chance to see the city, meet people and learn new things, and I reached the conclusion

that without studies everything is meaningless. One advantage of being literate was that I gained a lot of confidence. Before this, I was scared and answered only questions I was asked, but now I could answer my parents on some of the things that I thought to be right.

There was a tradition in our family for all the family members to sit together and consume liquor. I raised my voice against this custom and told my father that by consuming liquor, he was ruining our lives. Gradually my father understood my point of view and stopped drinking in front of us; and even when he did drink, he consumed less, and would go to sleep.

There were about fifteen other girls from my village who came to study at the centre with me. Being with them and talking to them every day, we exchanged our ideas, we listened to each other and respected each other's ideas and points of view. The village people did not like the formation of our group and often criticised us. We would sometimes give a reply but often we had to tolerate their criticism. I was convinced that we ought to be ready with an answer for a right cause.

Last year, in the neighbouring village of Chittor, the work of road construction started, in which about 100 workers from Ghani also worked. Nowadays, in every department and place, corruption is growing. While listing the wages of the labourers, the supervisor and the foreman would keep an amount of Rs. 2-4 from each labourer's salary in their own pockets. I felt like fighting against this corruption but I did not receive the cooperation of my co-workers and neither did I have adequate knowledge of the law etc. I kept quiet and remained a silent spectator to it all. God knows how much money these corrupt people stole from the illiterate poor labourers, and how they indulged themselves in luxuries. Although this work was a DPAP department project, their workers also had a hand in this malpractice and they too enjoyed themselves at the cost of the labourers. When the wages had to be paid to the labourers the foreman forged their thumb-prints and exploited them once again, and with that money, they indulged themselves in the "luxury" of wine and chicken. During the discussions at the literacy centre in my village, we had learned not to put our thumb-prints on false papers and to maintain a private copy of our attendance. So, when my turn came to put my thumb-print on the false papers I refused to do so and told my colleagues to abstain from doing so, but they were scared that the foreman would strike their names off the master-roll, therefore they continued to put their thumb-prints wherever the foreman wanted them to.

A similar kind of roll-call was held on 22 October 1980 at 10 p.m. because the department people knew that at night whatever wages would be given to the labourers, they would accept without protest. That is what happened. That night the 500 labourers accepted whatever was given to them as wages during the roll-call. We each received one or two days' salary less than recorded in our personal attendance registers. We wondered, is this what we get for carrying 20 kg loads of stones throughout every day? At the adult education centre I told this incident to all my friends and the teacher in charge of the centre. When I discussed this with the teacher in charge and the workers of Seva Mandir, they wrote a letter of complaint. When we were busy signing this letter, the foreman came to know about it and S... R... S... came to threaten me and said that it was not the right thing I was doing. He also said that he would not take me for work the next time. To that I replied, "We are the people who work, while you are busy exploiting us." At this moment my parents became very angry and asked whether I went to the centre to study or to fight with other people. The teacher in charge and myself tried to explain what was really going on. All my other friends got scared. But I was adamant that when we work, no-one else should receive the money! The letter reached the DPAP. However, because the departmental people there were

also responsible for all these things, our letter had virtually no effect on them, and when the work of threatening started all over again, we twelve people who had sent the letter were not taken on the job. We all decided that if they would not keep us on the job for a year, and would not give us the money that they owed us, we would still continue to keep pressing the department. We saw the master-roll three or four times in connection with the proceedings, and also met the Sessions Judge thrice, and sent back the letter to Kherwada. Seeing that we were adamant about this and would not leave them, they gave back the money which they owed me, and took us back on the master-roll. When these foremen, this year, were working in the Forest Department they refused to take us as labourers for a relief project in our area. We continued our efforts and surrounded the village leader and the Forest official. Due to these incidents, the villagers grew quite angry, but I feel that we took the right step, which is why they had to back down. I believe in continued joint effort, hence I am for ever working for it, and keep explaining these courageous ideas to them. Gradually these ideas are having an influence on the rest of the women workers in the village. While before, only girls of the 15-20 age group came to study at the centre, now even women of 30 years, who have children, are coming to the centre.

Besides this, they have this year opened a sewing centre in our village, and I am working as an assistant sewing teacher at it.

In all these efforts I have had sustained cooperation and advice from the Seva Mandir workers, because of which my ideas and arguing power have been on the increase. I am sure, in the future, I will work for these development works and help in the uplift of my village people.

From the above described efforts and incidents I have learned to read and write and to realise the rightful position of women in our society, and also learned that continued effort can do the impossible. Finally, my involvement in development programmes has helped to increase my courage.

Rajkumari, Ghani

General Introduction

This handbook presents fifteen case studies on the non-formal education of women from several Commonwealth countries located in the Asian region. The countries covered are India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Each section is accompanied by an introduction which highlights the major points of the case studies of the region.

The material and data presented in these documents pertain to the period between 1975 to 1980 generally, and in some specific cases, for special reasons, go back further in time. Some of the material and data were specially collected for this document. The main aim of this presentation is to place in the hands of the concerned people both in governmental and non-governmental agencies concerned with the planning and administration of non-formal education programmes the collective experience in operating such programmes for women, under different cultural, political, ethnic, economic and social conditions. The methodology of implementation of these programmes and the causes for successes and failures are explained so that insight can be provided for the planning and implementation of programmes for women.

It is hoped that the document has been successful in achieving, at least to some extent, this aim. Some readers, perhaps, would have found it useful to have more background information on the countries and the people covered in the case studies. However, this would have made the handbook too long. Moreover, it is expected that readers would have access from other sources to these data in respect of the Commonwealth countries covered here.

The studies have been arranged by countries, rather than by activities. This has been done with the following considerations in mind. The case studies are but a small segment of the tremendous effort which is taking place in Third World countries to modernise without losing the good values of the ancient and highly sophisticated cultures which exist there. The understanding of such social parameters and of the economic and political structures is necessary to grasp the full implications of the case studies. This is easier to do if the presentation is on a country-by-country basis.

The case studies present an interesting kaleidoscope. There are mixed populations of several races, such as Malays, Malaysians of Chinese origin, Malaysians of Indian origin, Sinhalese and Sri Lankans of Indian origin, tribals and non-tribals, Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. The only exception to this general mix of communities is Bangladesh, where the population is more homogeneous than in the other countries of the region. There is also tremendous multiplicity of languages, so that for the same programme, communication materials need to be organised in different languages. There is also tremendous variety in the levels of communities covered; for example, there are modern and advanced areas like Colombo and very backward and isolated areas like the Chatroo Block in Jammu and Kashmir State. These factors make the case studies presented here interesting and wide-ranging.

Even though the case studies relate to different countries and to populations which are extremely varied, there are several common factors. Wherever the programmes have been organised with peoples' involvement and participation,

whenever their feelings and needs are taken into account, they thrive. Getting the women to talk about their problems and needs and getting them to suggest a plan of action may turn out to be a long-winded and time-consuming process. After centuries of oppression women are often tongue-tied and shy of putting themselves forward. But though such programmes may take time to devise, they do bear fruit. Programmes started without consultation by the government or other organisations, if not related to people's needs, soon fail, however big the initial fanfare was. This is a lesson which every practical minded planner and social worker cannot afford to forget.

Another common theme is that one cannot treat a programme in isolation. The comprehensive approach is exhibited by Bangladesh in its programme of population planning through rural women's cooperatives, and the Kirillapone Project in Sri Lanka and the Mobile Creche Project in India. To begin with they had one specific aim of population planning or child care. But the planners soon realised that, unless the totality of life of their clientele was touched, progress could not take place. With 75 per cent of the population in rural Bangladesh living below the poverty line, the first need is survival. Population planning can have meaning only if there is enough sustenance.

The whole Asian region is highly populated. Pressures on land are tremendous and two countries of the region, China and India, are the most populous countries in the world. Cities like Calcutta or Colombo have populations equal to those of several small countries in Africa put together. It is therefore not surprising if, in all the case studies presented here, whether they be related to rural or urban areas, child care or income generation, the preoccupation of planners and social workers lies with programmes aimed to relieve the population pressure. Without population control, no development plan is going to work.

Politics plays an important role in all developmental programmes. And this is so even in respect of programmes which are avowed to be apolitical. G.K.Chesterton, the writer, has stated that every man is a philosopher even if he denies it: "Show me his actions and I shall tell you his philosophy," he argues. The same is true of developmental programmes, including women's programmes. Like Chesterton one can say, "Show us what is being done in the programme and we can deduce the politics."

Sometimes the politics may be of a narrow nature, arising out of expediency rather than a real political will; sometimes it is international politics and sometimes it is the politics of a dominant group. In all such cases, there is generally a considerable difference between what is stated as the aim and what is actually put into the field as a programme; many times it is offered more as a sop, and most times, it is without any real roots and is dependent on outsiders.

Some development programmes emerge and grow in strength when they are part of a national movement, a people's movement. For example, a good deal happened in the direction of women's emancipation in the real sense when India launched a national movement against the imperial power ruling the country, under the leadership of Gandhi and Nehru. Thousands of women living traditional lives came out into the streets, picketed shops selling foreign goods as part of the *Swadeshi* movement. They went to jail and participated in processions side by side with men. Similar phenomena occurred when Bangladesh fought its War of Liberation. The march of women towards their rightful place in a society cannot happen in isolation. When people define their own needs and become involved in programmes for their own development, the programmes generally work. But the programmes have to be related within

a larger framework of progressive policy at the national level if they are not to fizzle out.

The Malaysian study of the Kanita Project makes this very point in a subtle but telling manner. Although it talks about the project's being framed within the existing social structure, it concludes, "Women's potential as community leaders may only be realised if the existing social hierarchical structure changes, giving women more time and opportunity for decision making on the political level." At another place the study points out:

> "The existing political structure encourages the perpetuation of a formal leadership system which is greatly dependent on the bureaucracy for assistance, guidance or information about new, more innovative development strategies. With grass-roots leaders being nominated by the bureaucracy and being given ascribed statuses that guarantee long-term accessibility to government benefits and services, it is likely that complacency and self-interest may be more frequently manifested than dedicated leadership based on communal interest. The ideal strategy would be to change the system of leadership, by decentralising the powers of the district office and transferring the responsibility to people."

The basic truth of this observation is familiar to every sincere field worker. On occasions we may have to substitute multinationals, dominant groups and elites for district offices or bureaucrats, but the situation is the same all over the Third World.

This is not to deny that public-minded individuals, social workers, academics and sincere bureaucrats will make a difference to the quality of the programme being offered, but such efforts cannot go very far. For a new wind to come, the whole nation has to be committed to change and there has to be a political will for such a change. It must, for example, be accepted that any programme for the non-formal education of women will, if successful, bring about a change in the woman's attitude to herself, to her social relationships, to her aspirations and to her environment. This will bring an end to male dominated society. Every successful developmental programme will change the status quo. Dominant groups and elites have to be resigned and prepared to accept that they may not remain privileged in the new order of things.

Finally, some thoughts on women's participation in development. Development is a much misused word. For centuries, women have occupied a low status in comparison with men. Plenty of lip-service is paid to the equality of women with men and in fact, in several countries, legally the women are treated as equal with men in many matters; yet it is still a man's world and in practice women remain subservient to men. A woman weaver, 38-year-old Mmalseta Dintwe of the Oodi Weaving Centre in Botswana has related her views in this respect succinctly. After commenting on the changes that have come which have made it necessary for women to work along with men, as otherwise they would not be able to support their compound, she observes:

> "I think the work of women is heavy. For instance, if I plough with my husband and it comes time for rest, I will stamp corn in order to make food. He then tells me to bring water for washing. While I am cooking, he sleeps and I will wake him when the food is ready. The following morning, we wake up together and go to the fields, and after we finish,

> he knows that he has finished and I then start weeding. I harvest. Men are cheating us badly; they are people loved by God. We took it before, as it was our job and because things were easier, but now we are beginning to see that we are being cheated because things are changing. We now see that we are being killed by work."

It is indeed a fact of life that economic development and modernisation, when unaccompanied by social justice and fair distribution of national income - a phenomenon pretty common in most of the developing world - has pauperised the countryside and placed a greater burden on those sections of population that were already disadvantaged. For them (both men and women) the process of development has meant development of underdevelopment and life has become harder. Therefore women too have to be gainfully employed. But at the same time, they have to carry on their traditional duties too, in which men hardly help. Thus the women's burden has become greater than before even in terms of physical work and despite general development, they continue to remain second-class citizens in any country.

The consciousness that this is not right and things could be organised better for women is the spark from which the real development of women could begin. Such awareness should also lead women, and men too, to realise that real development for the entire society is possible only when the social and economic order is fair and just. One of the first steps to bring this about is to ensure that women are accorded their rightful position in the society not only *de jure* but *de facto*.

A developing society is a dynamic organism and as for the healthy growth of the human body, all the parts must receive nourishment and adequate exercise, so also for the healthy development of a society, each unit of the society, i.e. every person without distinction, must share in its resources. Otherwise only certain sections of the society would develop. Sooner or later such imbalances would lead to malfunctioning.

The effects of the current social changes are different on men and women. Those concerning women have tended to be noticed less. Women's concerns have to be seen as central to the process of development. Then talk of "integrating" women into development would become redundant. For truly, without women, there is no development.

Mrs Ila Bhatt, an eminent social worker whose work in the Self-employed Women's Association (SEWA), in India (not included in this handbook as SEWA has been documented internationally and is well-known), observes that women have become invisible to planners. Very few development programmes take into account that the natural tasks of child bearing and rearing, as well as the jobs in the house which a woman is always expected to do, impose a great burden on her, especially when she also has to act as a breadwinner for the family or contribute to the family's budget by earning. The case studies support these observations again and again. It appears that unless women start functioning effectively at technical and political decision-making levels, developmental programmes which would keep at their core the concern for women and their special needs will be limited in number. However liberal and well-meaning men might be, they would not know where the shoe pinches. In a man's world, they do not have to wear the ill-fitting shoes. The simple example of agricultural tools should illustrate the point. Over several development decades, improvements in agricultural implements have taken place. Yet in most developing countries, although the women work side by side with men in the fields, the size and shape of even new implements have remained proportionate to the physical build of men. The thought has just

not occurred that there could be different designs for women agricultural workers. No wonder therefore that development programmes in the use of science and technology ignore the special needs of women.

The imbalance which exists in developmental plans and programmes needs to be corrected. There is an absence of special programmes for women which look at the world from the viewpoint of women as equal participants in development.

Most of the cases included here are about programmes of developing skills for gainful employment, for income generation, literacy, family planning, nutrition and child care. Women's awareness that the present order of things is unjust, and that they can change it, comes through a specific participant's own efforts as she works out things for herself, and through the confidence she gains as she becomes economically less dependent on men. In most of the programmes in this document, such awareness is not explicitly included as an objective. Yet developing such understanding and building up women's confidence ought to form part of every programme for women. Moreover, they should also be made aware that self-reliance, rather than self-pity for their lot, is more important.

The developmental framework for women's programmes must also include programmes for family education, particularly for men. They too must understand that there can be no development without women. The Bangladesh studies on population planning through mothers' clubs and integrated rural development programmes go to show that the education of the community on the rightful status and role of women, side by side with the development programmes for women, is necessary.

Three things could be considered as basic ingredients for creating the right climate for development: a socio-economic political structure in which, side by side with the process of modernisation, social justice is not merely paid lip service, but is actually practised; building of awareness in both men and women that, without women, no development is possible; and last but not least, organising of women for self-help.

Self reliance in women must be combined with judicious help from the state and voluntary agencies to supply inputs which cannot be found locally. The Kanita Project in Malaysia shows the importance of building awareness in both men and women. The effectiveness of the development of self-reliance with selective outside help can be seen in the Kaduwela Training Programme of Sri Lanka.

Further, this self reliance should be operating not only in the implementation of a programme but also in identifying the needs of the population and planning a programme to meet them. Many a programme has gone astray because the outside planner has unilaterally decided what should be the aim of a specific programme. So long as somebody was there to push,the programme continued but it fell into disuse the minute the outsiders left. Even if what the local population wants may seem ridiculous, it cannot be rejected out of hand. The psychological bases of even seemingly ridiculous needs are important enough to give pause for thought. This is particularly so when programmes are being operated which go against traditionally accepted concepts and values.

A corollary of the statements made above is that any developmental programme for women has to be a part of the bigger national effort for development and should have links with its policies and programmes. Even a programme of teaching crafts in a village will not be successful unless there

is a policy to promote such crafts to ensure finance on easy terms, availability of raw materials, tools and marketing facilities, and fair prices. The lack of a systems approach and inadequate managerial skills have been the common failings of many programmes, as the case studies show.

Another factor which has a tremendous bearing on the development issue is that of population pressure. In most of the developing world populations are increasing at a galloping speed. Family planning programmes take time to make their effects felt. The next few decades are going to be extremely critical. Planners have to ensure that there are sufficient fruits of this generation's development efforts to be distributed among the next, more numerous generation. Advances in technology make it feasible that such quick development could take place if the necessary conditions exist. One important prerequisite for such a thing to happen would be an integrated communications system using mass media, small media, and interpersonal communication. Under conditions of rapid modernisation in a democratic set-up, people are asked to make decisions in areas unknown to their parents - whether to use crops for home consumption or for sale, the number and spacing of births, the type and level of education to be provided for their children. Today people are forced to deal with aspects of life for which their traditions and accumulated experience offer no guidance.

The Tanzanian programme *Mtu ni Afya* (Man is Health), using face-to-face contact, literature and radio campaigning for a health programme, provides an interesting example of the use of a good media mix. The Tanzanian programme worked because Tanzanian developmental strategy places an emphasis on people's involvement in the discussion of development plans which affect their lives. Traditionally, in Africa, decisions were made by discussion until agreement was reached. Tanzanian planners wisely revived this tradition in the *Mtu ni Afya* programme. It was also kept flexible to accommodate the needs and environments of different groups. The method was also a well tried one, having been used earlier in political campaigning. A big publicity effort was gradually mounted through posters, press, radio and word of mouth. The coordination of government departments, university, the political party and voluntary organisations was good. It was not only for women but directed rightly towards the entire community. However, the campaign was significant in its inclusion of women in every aspect of planning and implementation. In a subsequent campaign on food ("Food is Life") women took part as group leaders, wrote scripts, produced radio programmes and acted as evaluators.

In the developed world, the woman's work is made easier by a number of household gadgets. Moreover, it is increasingly accepted that looking after the children and housework are joint tasks of both parents. Such a realisation by men in the developing world will still take considerable time because attitudes built over centuries cannot be changed easily. The education of the family and of men in these matters is a neglected but important part of the overall developmental programme.

However, there is one area in which more efforts at the national and regional levels could be mounted to reduce the drudgery of the woman's traditional work. Research using appropriate technology can develop cheap but labour-saving household gadgets. In fact, in many laboratories of the developing world, many such devices already exist. What is wanting are field trials, marketing and popularisation.

Non-formal education programmes of women are rather limited in nature. Income-generation programmes, for example, remain largely limited to traditional and home crafts such as cooking or basket making and weaving. Where there is no market tie-up or expert advice on designs and quality control,

the programmes degenerate quickly. It is necessary that income-generation programmes do not remain limited to these crafts but use better technology and tie into other production and distribution networks. If illiterate men can use lathes, there is no reason why illiterate women cannot also use them. As functional skills develop, the motivation for women to become literate might increase. The main constraint on women is their mental conditioning. They have to be helped to break out of their psychological prisons and develop new attitudes and self-confidence.

Case Studies from India

INTRODUCTION

The six Indian case studies are drawn from the north (Delhi and Kashmir), south (Madras) and west (Gujarat). Thus they represent projects and schemes implemented under a wide variety of geographical conditions, from snowy mountains to arid plains. In addition they represent both urban and rural contexts. The Mobile Creches for Working Mothers Scheme in Delhi, the Working Women's Forum in Madras, the Annapoorna Mandal Programme in Bombay and the Jyoti Sangh in Ahmedabad are targeted, respectively, at migrant construction workers, slum dwellers, working-class women and unskilled women. The other two case studies focus on rural women, from catering services in the west to functional literacy for mobile cattle-herders in the far north.

The reader will be able to pick out some regularly recurring themes in all the studies. One is the tendency for an organisation to focus initially upon a particular group of women and a particular type of activity, but gradually to incorporate other groups of women with similar needs and to develop from one activity to another. Indeed the range of activities in almost all the schemes is remarkably similar, from income-generation skills training to nutrition and child health, from literacy training to community self-help.

One interesting feature of many of the programmes is their long history. The Jyoti Sangh in Ahmedabad was founded over fifty years ago during the freedom movement. But other organisations have sprung from earlier ones and have adapted in range and emphasis to meet current needs.

A somewhat persistent problem for some of the programmes is the tendency of middle-class and upper caste women to dominate the management. Of course, as the studies show, there is a long tradition in India of middle-class charity and patronage of the poor. But the most successful schemes are those where there is grass-roots participation of women in identifying their own needs and learning to organise self-help.

Most of the case studies are sponsored officially or through international agencies with some voluntary effort. The Maharashtra Scheme is interesting, however, in that it involves university students in social service at village level. The Kishwar Project, although enjoying official financing, receives too little help in terms of the interest of experts and skilled personnel to contribute to the functional literacy programme carried on in instructors' houses.

EDUCATION FOR LIVING (DELHI)

INTRODUCTION

The Mobile Creches for Working Mothers' Children is a voluntary programme which began in 1969 with a simple creche started by the late Meera Mahadevan. Ms Mahadevan, a writer and housewife who was appointed to a Women and Children's sub-committee in connection with the celebration for the Gandhi Centenary Year, was moved by the plight of construction workers' children who lay on rags in the dust and heat while their parents toiled on work sites. Her response to the situation was translated into action and, assisted by a few voluntary workers, she set up the first creche on a work site in a tent.

It was a spontaneous response to a need of the community without any preplanning or survey. The implementation of the programme resulted in the interaction of a voluntary group of women with the migrant construction workers as well as the economically and socially deprived women in the resettlement colonies following slum clearance in the city of Delhi. As a consequence, the individuals encompassed in the programme became aware of the manner in which they could improve their quality of life.

The "Mobile Creches" described in this case study comprise a complex integrated programme where, although the focal point is child care, several other programmes have evolved subsequently concerning the total family group. A small-scale but intensive programme starting with a creche later expanded its activities to include services for health, nutrition, non-formal education, pre-school and adult education, family planning and community services, and recreation for all members within a family.

The Mobile Creche has been chosen for this study as representing a model of a non-formal education programme for women whose literacy level is low, are migrants/inhabitants of resettlement colonies and who have not been integrated into the mainstream of urban society. In this case, as the target groups are the migrant construction labour on work sites and the low-income working mothers in resettlement colonies in Delhi, the development of the programmes has not followed any rigid plan. In fact, activities have evolved in response to the requirements of the groups.

For the present study, the components of non-formal education have not been isolated from the larger perspective. The non-formal education aspect of the programme is linked with all activities.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MOBILE CRECHE (DELHI)

After the establishment of the first creche centre in 1969, three more creches evolved within a period of eight months. Gradually the work expanded and by the end of 1971 the number of creches had grown to ten.

The year 1972-73 witnessed the development of many new aspects of the work as well as an extension of creches at factory sites outside the city limits of Delhi, and a branch in Bombay. Later, during the period when there was a slump in building activity, the Mobile Creche expanded its work to establish centres in the urban resettlement colonies of Delhi.

Along with physical expansion in terms of increasing the number of centres, the programme also expanded in response to the demands of new situations and needs. Recognising that benefit to children would be better and greater if cooperation of mothers could be enlisted, many activities were started experimentally in the search for the best method to meet the current challenge. As a result, Summer Schools for Children, Mother Education Programmes, Systematisation or In-service Programmes, Scholarship and Skills Training Scheme, and the *Lok Doot* (Peoples' Messenger) came into being.

Today, at any given time, there are about 30 centres in operation in Delhi and about 24 in Bombay. Each centre has anything from 50 to 250 children. The total number of children cared for is about 3000 in Delhi and 2500 in Bombay. Although the beneficiaries mentioned are the children, in actual fact, it is the mothers who have also benefited from the programme.

For the year 1979-80, the scheme covered 30 construction sites, and nine resettlement colonies.

Between 1969 and 1980, nineteen construction sites were begun, nine resettlement colonies started, twelve centres opened and nine centres closed.

The Beneficiary Groups

Attention is focused today on two categories of people both belonging to the deprived section of the community. Whereas, on the one hand, the programme caters for the needs of unskilled labour who work on the building construction sites, on the other it creates greater awareness of a better quality of life among the women in the urban resettlement colonies of Delhi.

Construction Labour

Several research studies have revealed that the construction labourers in Delhi have migrated from Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in search of better economic opportunities.

Generally the close-knit network of kinship among the migrants, and their caste and religion, provide the mechanism through which information is communicated about opportunities available. These elements form important adaptive mechanisms for the migrant construction labourers once they reach the city.

This disadvantaged group from the poorest of the rural poor, and usually from the lowest castes, has strong roots in the village but in actuality spends several years in the city. They continue to live on the periphery of urban life and do not get assimilated into the mainstream of urban living. Their home is the temporary shelter of tin and brick on the construction site without the most basic amenities of water and sanitation. They have no access to education or medical facilities. Both parents work and babies are left in the care of older children who are thus deprived of an education and also of the chance of acquiring agricultural skills which they might have picked up in the village.

The environment is harsh on the child, marked by insecurity as well as devoid of any opportunities of work, education or recreation.

Resettlement Colony Dwellers

The resettlement colony dwellers are somewhat different. They comprise a heterogeneous mix of skilled workers, salaried workers from economically stronger groups (such as low grade employees of government), and the unskilled illiterate workers who are largely self-employed. The women of this group have to work hard for a living; they do the most menial tasks and are

socially and economically at the lowest rung of the ladder. Inadequate facilities for education, health or sanitation in the environment exposes the child to a cynical self-seeking environment where the philosophy of survival is pervasive.

The Programme as it is Today

The Mobile Creche today runs a chain of centres in Delhi and Bombay providing integrated day care for children of the beneficiary groups described above, and also a variety of other programmes aimed at the adult population.

The general objectives of the Mobile Creche are to:

1. provide day care for the young children of working mothers;

2. provide opportunities to children of illiterate and semi-literate parents, to better their education and constructively channel their activities. Identification of the needs of children revealed the desirability of:
   (a) creches for children up to three years old,
   (b) *Balwadis* (pre-school) for children from three to six years,
   (c) non-formal education for children over six years to fourteen years,
   (d) extra coaching classes for older children to enable them to get admission to municipal schools,
   (e) recreation, provision of summer camps, sports, and vocational training programmes;

3. provide basic knowledge to the mothers in the fields of nutrition, health and other allied spheres which would help the families to lead a life less riddled with disease.

The specific objectives of the Mobile Creche in relation to the resettlement colonies are to:

4. provide a focal point for nuclear families to find comradeship and pursue common interests;

5. provide training in income-generating skills e.g. sewing and functional literacy.

The specific objectives of the Mobile Creche in relation to the construction sites are to:

6. help migrants to learn the use of city facilities, especially hospitals and the departments responsible for issuing ration cards, and to gain sufficient confidence to use the school system.

Organisational Structure and Functions

As the programme evolved at the Mobile Centres is not imposed upon the community on the basis of a predetermined plan, workers determine the activities for the day at each morning meeting of the centre. The flexibility of the daily routine, however, is supported by a strong programme of supplementary nutrition, medication and educational activities.

Although,strictly speaking, it is true that the organisation functions in a hierarchy at three levels, namely management, supervisors and field workers, yet in actual operation workers at each level are given equal importance in the successful running of the centres. In fact, the importance of the field worker was recognised to be crucial in the implementation of the programme at a very early stage, and consequently management and field workers work closely together. This is true not only with regard to the emoluments

drawn but also on decision-making occasions; for example, at meetings and discussions held for the purpose of modifying any programme or finding solutions to day-to-day problems, the opinions of field workers are given weight. This approach in the organisational functioning has resulted in initial respect at all levels as well as a sense of shared purpose. Undoubtedly economic needs prompt field workers to join the organisation; nevertheless, they are as sensitive as the management to the problems of the deprived community whose needs they serve.

Recruitment and Selection of Personnel

At the field level, personnel are recruited by a process of self-selection. They are placed in a centre to participate and observe, and if they cannot adjust to the demands of the situation, they leave. The Mobile Creche has found from experience that the best field workers are found from among those who have completed high school and belong to the low/middle income group.

Supervisors-cum-trainers are drawn from the field personnel who have proved themselves and have acquired skills through the in-service programmes. Besides supervising they also assist in training the new recruits.

The management consists of a governing body of ten people drawn from persons actively involved with the Mobile Creche. The Chairman, Secretary and five others also hold executive responsibilities.

Funding

The Mobile Creche meets its annual expenditure from grants from various sources, namely the Government of India, the State Government, international voluntary agencies and trusts, and donations from individuals. Contractors also support a centre by contributing towards the expenses. The amount contributed varies according to the motivation of the contractor. The Mobile Creche also raises funds from its own activities such as the sale of spices and greeting cards, and jumble sales.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN

Very early in the programme, the staff of the Mobile Creche realised that all their efforts to reach the child would be futile and the benefits derived by the infants would be limited, so long as their parents remained unaware and illiterate. This was the beginning of the non-formal education of adults, particularly mothers, of the migrant and resettlement colony families. Thus, over the years, a network of activities has been built up to reach them.

The main objective of the programme was to "create awareness, knowledge and skills required for a better life of the family within the constraints of the environment". As such the non-formal programme today is structured around health, nutrition and practical living, for which a range of techniques has been evolved. While it is true that each organisation evolves within the limitations of its own logic and methodological strategies, the programme of the Mobile Creches could be studied for wider application in those programmes where the child is the entry point for providing non-formal education to the mother. Subsequently, it is she who becomes the most intimate contact point with the community and also the communicator of the needs of the neighbourhood.

Interaction

One of the most effective techniques used in the non-formal programme is the constant and consistent one-to-one interaction between the staff operating a programme and the target groups. The Mobile Creche uses every opportunity provided during the activities of the day to reinforce continually the animator-learner relationship. For instance, at the Mobile Creche Centres at construction sites, the mid-day break (when mothers come to breast-feed their

children) is an occasion for discussion and conversation which may centre around the day's problems, the items cooked by the mother for the day's meal, or the health of the members of the family. So, indirectly, the conversation concerns itself with the nutrition aspect, health and family life education. In addition to this, the creche-in-charge makes a twice daily round of the community,visiting each household in turn. She knows each member of the family by name and her obvious involvement and interest in the welfare of the family is an encouragement to the mother to participate fully in the other programmes of the creche.

A more formal structure for interaction is provided by the monthly *mothers' meetings* and the literacy classes held for the construction labour. The mothers' meeting is held once a month at each Mobile Creche Centre, either in the day time or in the evening and the topic discussed for the day is decided upon earlier by the staff of each centre. Discussion may focus on subjects like hygiene, nutrition, the need for inoculation, superstition, cooking habits, recipes, etc. The staff team arranges practical demonstrations on topics related to child health and development. Sometimes puppet shows are organised to elaborate a theme and a discussion follows the "shows" to drive home the "message".

Formal Literacy Classes

Literacy classes, which were started in 1971, today run at most of the twenty odd centres in Delhi, five days a week, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. This is the time when the labourer has finished the hard day's work and, having finished the evening meal, is relatively free to attend the class. Classes for men are held separately from those for the women. Owing to the constraints imposed by the migrancy of the community on construction sites, the size of the class and its composition varies. The number may come down to four or five at times when the labourers go to the village, or increase to 15 or 25 when the camp is full. The same group generally comes only for two to three months or until the construction is completed. Generally, during that time, new enrolments are made as and when others are attracted to the programmes.

The composition of the class is heterogeneous, including adults, schoolgoing children, and school drop-outs who often come to the class along with their illiterate parents. The Mobile Creche thus does not and cannot function with any concept of a "batch" of learners,* as those attending vary in age from 10 to 45 years and differ in terms of their social and mental developments. Consequently there is total flexibility in the programme and each person progresses at his or her own level of capability.

Although about 1500 adults throughout the year attend classes, average attendance is about 250 men and 150 women each month. The rate of literacy obtained is approximately 15 per cent. A typical literacy class for female construction workers is held by the light of a petromax lamp in a little cleared space in the middle of the colony. Children generally sleep or play around the class; while the evening meal is not yet over in some huts. It takes about half an hour to set up the class by going from house to house and urging the mothers and girls to hurry and attend. An hour or so is devoted to a formal lesson with individual attention for each, and the rest of the time to a discussion. Once a week a session of devotional songs is held.

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* The learners can be classified in categories of literate, semi-literate (advanced), semi-literate (intermediate) and beginners. The literates are the schoolgoing boys and girls who can read and write fluently; the semi-literates (advanced) are those who are studying part 2 of *Apni Baten*, lessons 4-7, while beginners are either those who are just admitted as illiterates or those who have not reached part 2 of *Apni Baten*.

Curriculum Materials

The Mobile Creche has designed a set of nine reading booklets and a series of two Primers called *Apni Baten* Part 1 and 2 in response to the specific requirements of the groups of learners. Finding the material available for adult learners not adequate or suitable, the Mobile Creche has over the years designed its own curriculum through the combined efforts of the supervisory staff and teachers. The content of the books is based on stories, topical and relevant to the learners in a language familiar to them.

In addition to the books, the Mobile Creche uses other equipment such as flash cards, discussion charts, games, audio-visual aids, and puppets, all of which have been designed at joint workshop sessions of the Mobile Creche staff and experts in non-formal education.

Besides imparting the "three R's", the literacy classes are a focal point for discussing matters of topical interest as well. The newspaper is read out and items of current interest taken up for discussions. Through teacher-participant interaction, the solutions to various day-to-day problems are found and later implemented by the mothers. The literacy classes are generally conducted by the staff who look after the day-care centre of the Mobile Creche and are therefore conversant with all aspects of the lives of the community. Besides, they are familiar with the limitations of the set-up, particularly the difficulty of timings and different levels of the learners. Experience and the cooperation of the participants helps them to overcome several of these limitations.

Communication

Development of communication media is another very vital aspect of the non-formal programme. A very special feature is the organisation of its folk theatre group namely the *Lok Doot* (People's Messenger).

Like all other activities of the Mobile Creche, the Lok Doot has also grown out of a need - that is, in response to a need for entertainment for a group of people who have no access to recreational facilities. Using this need as an entry point, the Lok Doot has become a valuable educational tool to increase the awareness of its audience and reinforce the discussions which are a part of the rest of the programme.

The Lok Doot, which started in 1976, now has twelve members, eight full-time and four part-time. Most of them are regular Mobile Creche staff who have some special talents for drama or music. They are all familiar with the problems of the community and readily acceptable to the community.

For maximum impact and relevance, the everyday dialect of the audience, its favourite current jokes, and contemporary incidents are dramatised. In fact, Lok Doot has created plays, skits and mimes centering on themes and experiences common to the audience. All the material is devised and produced by the collective effort of the members. Plays are built around topics like alcoholism, superstition, child marriage, civic responsibilities, importance of nutrition and prevention of illness, etc.

A typical play is *Rog Rani*, where disease is personified as a queen with her army of germs. Using popular tunes, simple colloquial lyrics have been set to music and with the use of mime a loosely structured play has been built up. Other titles are equally descriptive: *Andh Viswas* (Blind Faith) and *Jhoota Ticket* (False Ticket), dealing with the evils of illiteracy.

A full performance of Lok Doot takes place on an improvised stage in the construction camp or slum, with the help of musicians and drums. Two

members of the group sit in the audience and pass comments to provoke reactions from the audience. Generally two performances are given in a month.

In addition to the Lok Doot, a "mini" Lok Doot also functions in a similar way, using only two or three staff members for its presentations. Themes of the Lok Doot plays are painted on scrolls called *Phad* (a Rajasthani traditional technique), and as the scroll is unrolled, the two performers explain the significance of each picture with songs and mime.

Through experience, the Mobile Creche has discovered that the "audio" element has a much greater impact than the "visual"; this is especially true for an illiterate population for whom the tradition of listening to stories, songs and recitation of epics is a much stronger one than the superimposed one of responding to pictures and charts which they often cannot decode. Hence the stress on the development of Lok Doot which makes use of songs, metaphors, folk lore, rhyme and recitation. As Lok Doot is constantly experimenting with new techniques and media, the repertoire is enlarged. Intensive workshops, once a month, are held and training in theatre skills is given both by Mobile Creche senior staff and also resource persons whose skills are tapped by the Mobile Creche as and when required.

In addition to the theatre medium, Mobile Creche has other communication methods based on the traditional cultural medium of the people, such as masks, puppets, charts etc. These are generally utilised by the mini Lok Doot and such performances at "Mothers' meetings" or at "Nightly meetings" become a starting point for discussion.

The Mobile Creche is concerned not so much with the artistic standard of the representation as with the effectiveness of theatre as a medium of communication. It now proposes to develop its drama activities further by encouraging young adults from among the target groups who attend the literacy classes to participate in the plays. In this way it hopes to increase their social awareness and also strengthen their capacity to work together. Further experiments with new forms of plays are being made by the staff of Mobile Creches. The intention is that role playing and psychological dramas should be performed which will ultimately extend the dramatic skills to a wider group.

Training

As the programmes of the Mobile Creche develop and the activities expand, there is need for trained personnel. As a result a programme of training and management has evolved which is kept under constant review. The training is geared towards developing the ability of the staff to function in the practical situation of the work site. This is achieved through demonstration and guidance at field level. It is bolstered by workshops giving information. The flow of ideas is maintained through regular problem-solving meetings between the staff and community members. This procedure helps to strengthen morale as well as creating a feeling of camaraderie.

The most important input of the training programme is its *human resource* development. The manpower that is most readily available is not trained or skilled. The whole programme rests on developing this manpower specifically for the needs of the programme. Material inputs are kept to a minimum.

Another important aspect of the training programme is that the trainer is at the same time a worker in the field who works alongside the trainee. In fact, if, over a period of time, the trainee proves to be effective, she in turn can hope to become a trainer supervisor.

Each training centre is run by a team of teachers and creche workers. Supervisors, who have had experience in handling centres independently, are in charge of two centres each and senior (zonal) supervisors look after five centres each. Both supervisors and zonal supervisors train new staff and handle site problems.

Policy decisions with regard to the day-to-day working of a centre are not taken by the management on its own. In fact, twice a month at joint meetings, supervisors and field workers discuss problems, new activities, accounts, planning and coordination.

All other categories of staff, semi-literate creche workers, literate creche workers, *Balwadi* (kindergarten), pre-primary and primary teachers attend one workshop a month for further training in methods and curriculum planning. The staff of literacy classes (who are part-time and full-time Mobile Creche staff members) meet every week in the evening.

As the field worker is the lynchpin of the Mobile Creche Programme, much care and thought is given to her training. She is given an orientation course after which she is attached to senior staff at a centre for two years. The exposure in the field, the assignments under the guidance of the supervisor/trainer, and the interaction of various workers and experts at regular workshops all help in training the fresh recruits.

In the first instance the method of discussion and feedback is central to the system of training. Secondly, because the field worker has to work with disadvantaged groups on low cost projects, she is required to develop certain important qualities, namely:

- initiative/ability to create facilities through seeking help from the community: to arrange for water, create level play areas, build boundary walls etc.

- confidence in being able to deal with emergencies, hospital authorities, etc.

- ability to devise activities that interest children and break through the prejudices of new groups.

- multipurpose preparedness for care activities and teaching.

- interest and ability to integrate with the community and participate in their festivities. Ability to organise meetings and communicate.

In addition to this, the training seeks to build up skills, information, and knowledge of methods on infant care, health care, and pre-school and primary teaching.

In a programme like that of the Mobile Creche, hierarchical structures are not relevant since the toughness of the situation demands a sense of unity and comradeship, recognition of the dignity of labour, and equality.

Impact

The initial evaluation of a programme, where the achievements are to be judged in qualitative terms rather than in quantifiable statistics, is a task which is not easy.

Some quantitative indications are however useful, though in a limited way. These are the increase in the number of immunisations/sterilisations;

the initiation and growth of savings accounts; the number of admissions of children to regular schools; and the numbers attending literacy classes for both children and adults.

The more important and relevant indicators are the ones which reveal the attitudinal changes which have taken place within the community. The parents of children who have attended Mobile Creche once very often look for such facilities wherever they move, while parents of schoolgoing children, who were again initiated into the school concept by the Mobile Creche, have been found to be sufficiently motivated to have children continue their schooling.

The Mobile Creche is able to see a slow change in food habits as well as a desire for a hygienic environment. Recently women have been asking for community latrines to be constructed, as the availability of private spaces decreases in the cities.

While resigned to their lot in many ways, some of the women have also been motivated to ask for different kinds of employment for themselves.

The monitoring and feedback of the programme and experiments are constantly going on. In addition, the Mobile Creche has undertaken the task of systematic collection and analysis of data for the last three years.

Constraints

Since the non-formal programme depends heavily on the input of staff and selects them by a tough process of self-elimination, this itself is a major constraint on the expansion of the programme. Since quality rather than numerical strength is desired, the process is necessarily slow. Linked to this is the problem of finance for programmes. Money being inadequate, the expenses have to be kept low. Efficiency therefore needs to be ensured even when salaries are low.

The special constraint to the Mobile Creche programme is the migrancy of the construction workers' group, which in turn has shaped the entire effort. While other non-formal projects may not be faced with this problem, the techniques which the Mobile Creche has developed to deal with it could be replicated in terms of their flexibility and relevance.

FROM DESTITUTION TO LEADERSHIP THROUGH NON-FORMAL EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE WORKING WOMEN'S FORUM (TAMIL NADU)

INTRODUCTION

It is in the overall context of the history of Madras City, women workers, formal and non-formal education for girls and women, slum clearance, and the history of social work in Madras that the Working Women's Forum has to be understood.

Development planners today have realised that the policy of expansion of the formal schooling system followed in the past can no longer be carried into the future. It has become increasingly clear that it is necessary to incorporate into the system other educational influences operating in the economy and society; this means the incorporation into a coherent programme for the growth of the individual of the "existing educational or socialising, skill-giving and otherwise profitable experience of the community, mass media, and the proliferating state agencies".

The World Bank in its paper for the World Conference of the International Women's Year in 1975 says that in the traditional as well as in the modern sector, the key to becoming a part of the economic mainstream is education. If women are to make their greatest possible contribution to the national effort, access to quality education is essential. The Sixth Plan document gives priority to non-formal education for adults, particularly in the productive age group 13-35 years, "in view of its potential for immediate impact in raising the level of productivity in the economy".

The present case study of the Working Women's Forum is of a programme which developed in response to the reaction of women in Madras to their total situation. The first part gives a brief history of the various factors in the context of which the Forum functions, while the second part gives details of the work of the Working Women's Forum.

THE CITY OF MADRAS

The city of Madras is a symbol of "British enterprise, energy and perseverance".(1) Until Indian Independence, Fort St George was the nucleus from which the British administered South India. Madras harbour commanded a large hinterland extending into present-day Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Madras is the largest city in South India, the fourth largest city in India, and the capital of Tamil Nadu State. The State scores well on some development indices. Its sex ratio is 978 females to 1000 males; while the female literacy rate of Tamil Nadu is 34.12.(2) While there are in Madras "trappings of modernity",(3) partly in the form of a variety of consumer goods, it is still in many ways a "rural metropolis", enjoying the best of both worlds - rural atmosphere and urban amenities.

As Madras City grew it slowly encompassed adjoining self-contained villages. Immigration and settlement patterns in Madras are relatively balanced in terms of age and sex, giving Madras a more family regulated system of social organisation than has been possible in other cities. The city also has a slower pace of life than other cities in India - the transition of a family

from village life to an "Adi-Dravida hutting ground"* in Madras is much less violent and confusing than the removal of an individual labourer from his village to a *busti* or *chawl* in Calcutta or Bombay.

Culturally Madras has been the home of Bharatnatayam, Carnatic classical music and South Indian Cinema. Madras City is constituted by the area under the jurisdiction of the Madras Corporation (128.83 square km). The Madras Metropolitan Area (MMA) (1166.76 square km) is designed for regional urban planning under the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority (MMDA) which was set up in 1975.

Women Workers

Only 28.1 per cent of the city's population constitutes the work force, which is made up of 91.3 per cent males and 8.7 per cent females. The situation is not very much different in the rest of the metropolitan area where the corresponding figures are 90.5 and 9.5 per cent respectively (see Table 1).

TABLE 1

Madras Metropolitan Area-Workers: 1971 (figures in '000)

Area in city	*Population*	*Non-workers*	*Workers*	*Male workers*	*Female workers*
Number	2469	1773	696	636	60
Percentage	-	71.9	28.1	91.3	8.7
Rest of the Metropolitan Area					
Number	700	499	201	182	19
Percentage	-	71.3	28.7	90.5	9.5

There is, however, significant variation in the occupational structure of the city and the rest of the metropolitan area. In the city, 25.7 per cent of the workers are engaged in industry, 24.4 per cent in trade and commerce, 23.5 per cent in other services and 18.5 per cent in transport. In the rest of the metropolis, 34.8 per cent of the workers are engaged in industry, 20.5 per cent in other services, and 13 per cent in agriculture, transport, trade and commerce.

UN statistics released at the Mid-Decade Conference on Women, Copenhagen, 1980, indicate that the unorganised sector forms 94 per cent of the population of working women. This sector comprises among others small home-based producers such as patchworkers, seamstresses, carpenters and smiths, small vendors such as vegetable and fruit sellers, used-garment dealers, and providers of services like hand-cart pullers, head-loaders, farm labourers and waste-paper pickers.

* Adi-Dravida is a particular type of scheduled caste.

Formal and Non-formal Education for Girls and Women

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Babu Peary Chand Mitra (1814-1883) and Raja Radhakanta Deb (1748-1867) collected many instances of educated women from the past history of India. Based on this, an article, "Native Female Education", was written in the *Calcutta Review* of 1855 saying that the "practices of close seclusion and of non-education of women are an innovation upon the proper Hindu system". By the beginning of the nineteenth century, "in social usage, in politics, in the realm of religion and of art, we had entered the zone of uncreative habit, of decadent tradition and ceased to exercise our humanity". In short, the education of girls was not the normal practice, to put it mildly. It was due to the efforts of nineteenth-century social reformers like Raja Radhakanta Deb, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and Christian missionaries that girls' education began to spread in India during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

In Madras City, the first attempt by missionaries at opening a school for the education of Indian girls was made in 1821. The Wesley Mission started its boarding school for girls at Royapettah in Madras City in 1849.

Other pioneers in girls' education in Madras were Annie Besant and the Theosophical Society, and the Women's Indian Association. The enrolment of girls in primary schools in Tamil Nadu in 1979-80, per 100 boys, was 85.3, the all-India figure being 65.6. The enrolment of girls in secondary schools in Tamil Nadu in 1979-80 per 100 boys was 65 (all-India: 53.2).

In spite of the quantitative increase in enrolment in the formal educational system, the vast bulk of poor women continued to be outside the formal educational system, and illiteracy, particularly female illiteracy, continues to pose a major problem. According to the 1971 census, the female literacy rate was 18.69 per cent for all India, and 26.85 per cent for Tamil Nadu. The female literacy rate of slum dwellers of Madras City was 29.72 per cent in 1971.

The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board

Even though public outlays for housing in Tamil Nadu went up from Rs.5,600,000 during the First Plan period (1951-56) to around Rs.303,000,000 during the Fourth Plan period, the slum situation became worse and "the progress of slum clearance efforts to this time had been very slow". Today more people live in slums than when the slum clearance scheme was started.(4)

The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) was therefore established in September 1970, with the following objectives:

- to clear all the slums in Madras City within a targeted period,
- to prevent further growth of slums in Madras City,
- to give protection to the slum dwellers from eviction and to rehouse them in modern tenements; and
- to provide basic amenities such as drinking water supply, electricity, storm water drainage, etc., to certain slum areas until they are finally cleared.

The targeted period was to be "by 1977". This prompted some citizens of Madras City to set up a citizens' pressure group called the 77 Society, which met every Monday evening at 6.00 p.m. over a period of six to seven years. In the comprehensive survey which the TNSCB carried out, all of the slums of Madras City were stated to be spread over 1202 hutment areas.(5) To rehouse

slum dwellers would require the construction of about 164,000 tenements at a cost of around Rs.1640 million (US $1 = Rs.8.82) for "total slum clearance". The TNSCB soon realised that many slum areas would need to be provided with services during the phased development of the tenement-building programme, and therefore started an environmental improvement scheme for provision of access roads, street lighting, water supply, latrines and storm water drains.

TABLE 2

Slum Areas Assisted Under the Madras City Environmental Improvement Scheme (Rs. in lakhs) (US $1 = Rs. 8.82)

Year	*Number of areas*	*Estimated Cost*	*Expenditure*
1972-73	104	258.15	95.60
1973-74	73	152.19	103.95
1974-75	115	95.70	113.06
1975-76	1	0.48	29.87
1976-77	-	-	4.42
Total	293	506.52	346.90

By 1981, 30,995 tenements were constructed (6) and about the same number of slum dwellers had been rehabilitated.

The TNSCB also recognised that community development schemes play an important role in any endeavour to improve the human environment. Therefore adequate encouragement was given to social welfare organisations to take up work among the new residents of the tenements, and several social service organisations came readily forward to assist the rehabilitated slum dwellers in shaping a new life.

Social Work in Madras

Madras City has a long tradition of charitable social service and slum work, particularly in the voluntary sector. Old, well-established voluntary agencies continue to work in Madras, for example, the Guild of Service (started in 1923), the Andhra Mahila Sabha (started in 1938), and the Stree Seva Mandir (started in 1949). One interesting aspect is that most of these voluntary agencies were and are run by women for women, many on an honorary basis, which has led to comments like "Social work in this country is done by fashionable women who have the spare time. They work to please themselves and in the process, get some publicity." This is no longer true. Not only are there now more voluntary agencies in Madras, staffed by persons with postgraduate degrees in social work; the voluntary agencies themselves are trying out more community-based and development-based approaches.

The Madras Metropolitan Development Agency added a Community Development Wing in 1975 with a Chief Community Organiser and several Community Development Organisers, almost all of them with postgraduate degrees in Social Work.

In March 1981 the whole Community Development Wing of the MMDA was transferred to the TNSCB.

It is hardly a coincidence that all the agencies mentioned above addressed themselves to the problems of formal education, non-formal education and income-generation for girls and women. The Guild of Service run the Seva Samajam Girls' Home, an educational institution for destitute girls and various income-generating projects such as a bakery production unit, printing press and canteen. The Andhra Mahila Sabha has vocational education classes for women. The Stree Seva Mandir has diverse types of income-generating projects for women such as carpentry units, handloom units, and a school furniture production unit. The Community Development Wing of the MMDA (now of the TNSCB) employs some community development organisers solely for employment-generation for women. The new Residents' Welfare Trust, started in 1972 to foster a sense of community feeling, later in 1973 began to diversify into arranging bank loans for women, setting up women's leather batik and other cooperatives. Another organisation, the Swallows Handicrafts Industrial Cooperative Society, is run by 86 disadvantaged women who have undergone a long period of non-formal training. It now produces various types of handicrafts mainly for export.

THE WORKING WOMEN'S FORUM

The Working Women's Forum adopts a community-based and development-based approach to the problems of women workers in the unorganised sector.

In November 1977 Jaya Arunachalam, a well-known political and social worker, was engaged in flood relief work in Madras City. As she went around the flood-affected areas talking to the women, she realised that the women were not primarily interested in the relief work consisting of food distribution of packets of food and assistance for renovating thatched huts. Their main preoccupation was with their earning capacity. They were mostly self-employed women working in the unorganised sector.

One woman said, "I am a vegetable-seller. I borrowed money from a money lender and bought vegetables from the wholesale market. The rain has washed away my stock of vegetables. I now cannot repay the money lender nor do I have money to buy another stock of vegetables." Another woman said, "As it is, I earn very little - about Rs.2 to Rs.4 a day. If out of that I pay interest to the money lender at the rate of Rs.12.50 to Rs.100 per month, I am left with very little money. Our earnings are so meagre." Some women complained about harassment by money lenders. Others talked about abandonment by husbands. The same problems were voiced by women working in various types of petty trades.

Jaya understood that their main problem was non-availability of credit. She asked them about loans from nationalised banks. Some of the women had tried to obtain credit from nationalised banks but failed. Jaya told a group of 30 women petty traders in a slum area in Nungambakkam in South Madras to form themselves into a group with a group leader. They did so, with Muniammal as their group leader. Jaya then talked with Bank of India officials. The 30 women got loans of Rs.300 each. Muniammal collected money every day from the 30 women and repaid the Bank of India. Within two or three months, Bank of India officials, Jaya and the 30 women realised that the system was working - the repayment rate was 95 per cent. The Working Women's Forum (WWF) was born.

The Working Women's Forum was registered in April 1978 with Jaya as the President and with the following objectives:

- to create an organisation for working class women in the unorganised sector;

- to mobilise them to common economic and social action for their betterment;

- to identify and meet the critical needs of working class women as far as possible through their own involvement;

- to improve their professional competence and skills through training and other supports;

- to mobilise the women to fight for their own rights by acting as a pressure group;

- to affiliate with other organisations interested in this work;

- to help provide facilities such as educational institutions, training and production centres, creches, and cooperative credit arrangements, needed by working women and their children.

During the next few months, whenever self-employed women came to Jaya asking for help with credit systems, she told them to form groups in their respective slum areas, elect a group leader and then come back to her. And thus the number of groups grew. From 300 members in April 1978, the WWF has now grown to 8800 members in Madras City, organised into 350 groups. Out of these 8800 members, 5000 have received loans from nationalised banks. Many of these 5000 women have repaid loans and have received fresh loans two or three times over. Repayment rates are about 90 per cent - a rate that has not been achieved by any other voluntary agency in Madras City. Thus a very effective institutional credit delivery and recipient system has been built up.

Very soon Jaya, the Secretary, Rajeswari, and some of the group leaders realised the potential of organising so many women - the "dormant woman-power". They also realised that the WWF was becoming a movement which was enabling very poor illiterate women living in absolutely destitute conditions to move to leadership positions; the WWF, they saw, could be a vehicle of social change. Nandini Azad describes the transformation of the WWF into a movement as follows:

> "The WWF catered in its early days mainly to poor destitute women with no financial or social standing; women facing societal harassment. They were widowed women, women deserted or divorced by husbands, harassed by co-wives or living in insecure conditions of common law marriages, bearing the brunt of male violence and bigamy. Women living in conditions of abject poverty, burdened with umpteen children, earning incomes much below the poverty line, faced with high maternal and infant mortality rates, living in unhygienic environments, illiterate and unaware of their rights, cheated by money lenders, middlemen and their husbands - the women found solace in this organisation, not only to obtain credit at a low percentage of interest (4 per cent), but also a *good counsellor for other problems...* The WWF is now a movement!"

Other Activities of the WWF

1. The WWF registered its own Cooperative Credit Society in 1981, with 2500 shareholders out of the 8800 members who had paid Rs.21 each. The Society was formed to get over some of the difficulties in working with nationalised

banks, to provide services such as skill-upgrading and market surveys, and to provide credit for its members.

2. The Family Planning Programme was an outcome of the growing realisation that income generation and large families were incompatible. Many of the women faced serious difficulties in raising the quality of life of their families due to their sheer size. Nandini Azad writes:

> "The project Experiment in Leadership Training was the solution to this problem. Through non-formal education it has built up a cadre of effective communicators and mobilisers for family planning from the target group itself. 60 women have been trained; they will give 100 per cent coverage to 6000 families in Madras City slums in 1981-82."

3. WWF members' self-help initiatives now help them to run twenty night coaching classes for children, ten craft classes, and ten day-care centres for infants.

4. As a form of social action, to achieve solidarity among the members and to alleviate the social inequalities present in the Indian situation, the WWF started performing mass, inter-caste, anti-dowry weddings. In 1978, 63 were performed and 106 in 1980. These marriages are registered and are a form of protest against the indignities and insecurities of common law marriages.

5. In 1980-81, through the lab-to-lab programme of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), WWF has turned to rural development. It has assisted 400 landless women agricultural labourers of Muthanampatti village, Reddiar Chathiram block, Dindigul Taluk, Tamil Nadu, to acquire livestock assets and has provided them with technical know-how to take care of animals in a scientific manner.

Impact of the WWF

1. Women's self-image has been enhanced. Because they are economically independent they have more decision-making roles in the home and in the community.

2. There is also a growing realisation that it is possible to control their own fertility, and more do so since they have no more need for the traditional status which they obtained from mothering a large brood of children.

3. According to Hilde Jeffers who evaluated the WWF,

   - 58 per cent of the women report that their families are eating better.
   - 53 per cent have more money for clothing purchases. 24 per cent are able to purchase more vessels or household items.
   - 22 per cent purchase more medicines.
   - 34 per cent feel that they have avoided money lenders.
   - 70 per cent feel an increase in income security.
   - These percentages are even higher among women who have received two or three loans, suggesting that providing more credit brings increased improvement in living conditions.

   Thus the WWF has certainly improved the economic conditions of its members.

4. Again, according to Hilde Jeffers' evaluation,

- 81 per cent of the women thought that they should plan an active economic role and have full choice about type and location of work.
- 1 per cent thought women should not work.
- 12 per cent thought women should only work if there was a family need.
- 10 per cent thought women should only work in the home.
- 50 per cent of the women preferred working outside the home.
- 31 per cent wanted secure jobs in offices or factories rather than self-employment.
- 90 per cent were opposed to the dowry system.
- 73 per cent believed in equal education and job possibilities for sons and daughters.
- 70 per cent of the women surveyed supported the promotion of inter-caste marriages. More support for inter-caste marriages surprisingly came from among the newer members.

Thus the WWF has crystallised members' reactions to their social conditions.

5. There is a definite reaction against exploitation and oppression: both against specific instances of exploitation, such as that by money lenders or husbands, and against general oppression through the social structure itself. Members are aware of their "woman-power" partly because of economic independence but mainly because of the support given by members of the organisation to each other, and there is an awareness of the importance of this support.

The Future

1. The WWF can be a powerful pressure group on civic authorities for better services and for provision of new services such as toilets in market places, covered markets, and day-care facilities for infants.

2. The WWF can insist to the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board on greater involvement in the planning of their housing programme.

3. The WWF can be a pressure group in rural areas for provision of more and better rural housing.

4. The WWF can influence government policy decisions which will protect and encourage small scale enterprise development.

5. The WWF, through non-formal education, can play a major role in changing attitudes of society towards men and women and the birth of sons and daughters. It can ultimately lead to a larger movement in India which will help to reverse the currently adverse sex ratio of females to males in the population and the low rate of women in work compared with men.

Reasons for WWF's Success

1. The community base of the organisation is one of the main reasons for the success. The key action posts in the organisation are poor self-employed women - the two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary and the two Area Organisers. The 350 group leaders automatically form the Governing Body. In a sense, only Jaya as the President is the "outsider". The part they play in decision making within the organisation gives the organisation strength. The office-bearers have a high sense of involvement, identification and participation. There is direct participatory management. Issues for focus by the WWF are chosen by the groups - groups meet often (at least once a month, but sometimes more often, especially during formation).

Group leaders raise these issues at Governing Body meetings which decide on action.

2. This also means that the Forum is quick to respond to problems of the members, since it is run by women aware of the problems of self-employed women. Some members told me, "there have been many voluntary agencies working in Madras City slums. This is the first one which has really listened to our problems and responded to our needs." For example, the group leaders encourage daily or weekly payments for some of the members who would find monthly repayments difficult. This flexibility is a direct response to awareness of members' needs.

3. Another source of strength is their solidarity. The women realise the capacity for bargaining which their solidarity gives. They know that they would suffer in the long run if they disrupted this solidarity (the sense of group strength rather than helplessness in the face of authority and adversity.) This knowledge is consciously fostered by non-formal education.

4. The women have a feeling of status and recognition which participation engenders. Women, however poor, step forward and discuss with pride their work, their plans, their community. They feel that initiative is encouraged. All this is reflected in their day-to-day work. For example, the group leaders are very conscientious about monitoring of repayments, since they are anxious to keep a good repayment record with the banks.

5. The women are clearly told about the role of the President, Jaya, including liaison with banks, donor agencies, government officials, and international organisations, and general administration; ideas from the outside world; the conducting of periodic inter-group meetings. They are aware of the nature of her astute leadership.

6. There was no need to create administrative staff from scratch; it was only necessary to adapt well-learned skills of political work to a different objective; some of the staff are former political cadres skilled in group organisation techniques.

7. At no stage is membership forced on anyone. The growth of the WWF is a natural process. Word of mouth brings increasing numbers of women to Jaya or Rajeswari. They are then told to organise their own groups and elect a leader. The group must review the loan applications and the leader agree to stand guarantor for the loan. At this point the Forum approaches the bank and a bank official comes to a meeting organised by the group leader. Bank staff say they count on the group leader to keep their administrative costs down. But to the group what matters is that it works. And when it works, the group decides to contribute to the building up of the WWF. They tell another group in a nearby slum; and so it expands.

8. The group leaders are informal leaders in relatively homogeneous communities - the groups are often composed of women belonging to the same occupation/caste/language group. (See also the earlier section where the slums of Madras City are described as villages with strong cohesive links in the community.) The group leaders thus meet their members on a daily basis in the course of everyday life or work.

9. Another important source of strength is that all funding is private: there are no government funds except for specific projects such as ICAR's lab-to-lab programme. Apart from the funding from private donor agencies, each

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member pays Rs.6 a year; this pays for most of the WWF's expenses. The women also realise that this independence adds to their right to dissent, or to be critical of both state and national governments.

10. The WWF relies almost entirely on volunteers. This keeps its overheads low. But it also keeps motivation and commitment high - money is not the motivation. The group leaders are not paid; they sometimes get a larger loan than the others. They accept responsibilities because they feel this is *their* organisation responding to their critical needs. They take up basic roles as change agents and take up the challenge of working within their own circles in a committed, confident and knowledgeable style.

11. The WWF systematically attacks the divisive features of caste/religion/politics. Women are taught to be secular and tolerant of other religions. The WWF's inter-caste weddings add to this. The women are proud of conducting the weddings. In the context of the highly politicised nature of Madras City slums, it is important that the WWF retains its non-political identity. The women realise this and stick to their conviction that politics will mess up their style of working.

12. The most important source of the WWF's strength is in its non-formal education strategies. Through a large variety of methods, the WWF has first of all made the members aware of their situation - their exploitation and oppression, for example. The members understand that they are women participating in their own development as well as that of the community. They realise that they have to fight poverty, oppression and discrimination, to improve their economic, social and professional status. They see that discrimination against women is an offence against human dignity and an infringement of human rights - discrimination which they suffer in spite of their hard work and valuable contribution to the city's economy. One woman quoted what is really the source of all their problems, the old Tamil saying that "a husband is to be given respect even if he is a stone or a blade of grass".

The WWF's educational process is an attempt to modernise two sub-systems of the total learning system, the incidental educational sub-system and the non-formal educational sub-system.

TABLE 3

Methods

Incidental Educational Sub-System	*Non-formal Educational Sub-System*
1. Radio programme	1. Conference on family welfare
2. Television programme	2. Training courses by Gandhigram Institute of Rural Health and Family Welfare Trust.
3. Processions	(a) How to obtain baseline data.
4. Inter-caste wedding celebrations	(b) Techniques of formulating and implementing programmes.
	(c) How to make individual contacts in community education.
	(d) How to establish linkages outside the family - with bureaucracies, holders of credit-power, municipal and health authorities.
	3. Review meetings.

Replicability

The WWF has received requests for replication from Adirampattinam village, Tanjore District, Tamil Nadu (a fishing village), and from Narasapur town in Andhra Pradesh (for women lace-makers in surrounding villages).

The WWF members are confident of being able to replicate their work: "Some of us will go to other places to organise women into groups. We are sure we can do it: after all the experience we have had now," they say.

What are the factors that account for the replicability of the WWF? One factor is the spartan budget and the low cost per member. It is estimated that the per-member cost is Rs.14.40 per year. Another factor is the importance of local leadership and the extent to which it is utilised. A third factor is the utilisation of existing community ties and shared interests which provide a channel of communication from the centre's staff down to the members and back up.

Initial leadership training costs are not very high. At least in the southern states of India it is certainly possible to find self-employed women with competence and experience in political or social work willing to volunteer their services.

Notes

1. Barlow, Glyn, *The Story of Madras*, London, Humphrey Milford, 1921.

2. 1981 Census; however the sex ratio of Tamil Nadu has not improved from 1971 (it was 978 in the 1971 census also) and has steadily dropped from 1044 in 1901.

3. Wiebe, Paul D., *Tenants and Trustees: A Study of the Poor in Madras*, New Delhi, Macmillans, 1981.

4. Rural Development and Local Administration Department, *Madras Metropolitan Plan, 1971-1991*, Government Publications, Madras, 1973.

5. *TNSCB Service to Slum-dwellers in Tamil Nadu*, Government Publications, Madras, 1976.

6. *TNSCB, Tamil Nadu and Madras: Some Basic Information*, Madras, 1981

APPENDIX I

Occupation of Members of Working Women's Forum who have Received Loans from Nationalised Banks up to January, 1981

Serial No.	*Trade Details*	*No. of persons*	*Percentage*
1	Sale of sarees and cut pieces	800	15.56
2	Sale of vegetables	1149	22.354
3	Sale of fruits	299	5.817
4	Sale of fish	25	0.486
5	Iddly shops	946	18.40
6	Cloth cut-piece trade	65	1.264
7	Plastic flower making	54	1.05
8	Vibuthi making	15	0.29
9	Sale of firewood	20	0.389
10	Wire bag making	198	3.85
11	Cycle shop	15	0.29
12	Tailoring shop	140	2.72
13	Toothpowder making	3	0.058
14	Sale of flowers	330	6.42
15	Sale of rice	70	1.36
16	Mat weaving	3	0.058
17	Tinkering workshop	145	2.82
18	Scrap iron shop	33	0.642
19	Sweetshop on roadsides	21	0.4
20	Hiring out	70	1.36
21	Snacks shop	4	0.07
22	Goldsmith's shop	2	0.038
23	Tea stall	35	0.68
24	Sale of green leaves	123	2.392
25	Pottery stall	30	0.58
26	Ready-made garment shop	25	0.486
27	Leaf stitching	12	0.233
28	Making of wooden domestic wares	5	0.097
29	Sale of Chunam	3	0.058
30	Beedi making	7	0.136
31	Sale of chilly powder	3	0.058
32	Stringing beads	5	0.097
33	Sale of bangles	4	0.07

Serial No.	*Trade Details*	*No. of persons*	*Percentage*
34	Appalam making	18	0.35
35	Sale of peas and peanuts	25	0.486
36	Sale of eggs	7	0.136
37	Bunk shop	40	0.778
38	Meat shop	60	1.167
39	Lungi trade	10	0.194
40	Footwear shop	2	0.038
41	Sale of salt	3	0.058
42	Zari garland	10	0.194
43	Making eatables at home for sale	8	0.155
44	Sale of groceries	3	0.058
45	Milk trade	75	1.459
46	Sale of straw for animals	5	0.097
47	Sale of cold drinks	6	0.116
48	Cart loading	120	2.33
49	Sale of petty aluminium vessels	19	0.36
50	Pickle shop	4	0.07
51	Sale of coffee powder	1	0.019
52	Mobile ironing stall	20	0.389
53	Waste paper shop	10	0.194
54	Carpentry work	3	0.058
55	Toy making	3	0.058
56	Sweet stall	8	0.155
57	Stationery shop	2	0.038
58	Wooden box making	5	0.097
59	Saree printing	3	0.058
60	Sale of gunny bags	3	0.058
61	Biscuit making	6	0.116
62	Mopping brush making	1	0.019
63	Cardboard box making	1	0.019
	Total	5140	100.00

AN APPROACH TO SELF-RELIANCE: AN URBAN MODEL IN BOMBAY, MAHARASHTRA - ANNAPOORNA MANDAL

INTRODUCTION

Annapoorna Mandal is a programme that seeks to organise working-class women who are running small eating places in their own homes for blue-collar workers. Each woman works in her own home, accepting boarders, generally factory workers who have no families and have migrated to Bombay in search of employment.

Prior to the piloting of this project, these women caterers used to operate with loans from money lenders. Indebtedness to the money lenders was a great burden as not only did they pay high rates of interest, mortgage jewellery,etc., but they were forced to buy their personal grocery on credit. As a result, in spite of 17-18 hours of work, these women could not make their enterprises economically profitable.

The project described here as a case study presents a model whereby incremental benefits can accrue through self-help. Having organised a method of being free from the clutches of money lenders, the scheme has motivated the women to think actively of means to resolve their other problems of life.

Such a programme can successfully be replicated where the promoter(s) have a good link and rapport with loan recipients and workers at the grass-roots level supervise money transactions themselves.

BRIEF HISTORY OF ANNAPOORNA MANDAL

The promoter of the organisation, Prema Purav, was a political worker who had considerable years of experience with working-class families in Bombay. She had knowledge of their requirements and their life-styles and had a close rapport with them. She devised a scheme whereby women caterers could take a loan and repay it in a manner that released the women from permanent indebtedness. In addition to making the women's activities viable, the scheme had plans for small savings which the women could operate on their own.

While the initial spadework was done entirely by Prema Purav, the organisation of the women into area committees with elected representatives helped evolve a democratic framework. Top-level decisions perforce had to be made by the organiser-promoter because negotiations at official level could only be done by educated persons with influence, but the committee members were involved and their needs were discussed in weekly meetings. The members thoroughly understood what the scheme was, how it was useful to them, how it was operated. Thus, they participated in it fully. They kept accounts, made withdrawals from the bank, made loan applications, etc., on their own. The responsibility for the operation of the scheme was left to the local committee with guidance from the President.

Although Annapoorna Mandal was initiated in 1975, the actual operation began in 1976. It started to function in one suburban area of Bombay (Byculla) with about 200 members belonging to the intermediate and lower caste working group of women. By the end of 1980, there were 4500 members covering eleven suburbs of Bombay. In each area (not slums but working-class

quarters called *chawls* the number of lunch-house women ranged from 200 to 400, while there were also some 500 vegetable sellers and 200 junk collectors who were part of the scheme.

Objectives
Considering the existing plight of the women in these areas, the organisers decided to start a scheme with the following objectives:

- to help women to obtain an easy source of credit which would not involve the need for types of security normally expected by banks;

- to help illiterate women understand the need for some kind of budgeting and finance management;

- to strengthen their economic position by providing support for what they were already doing;

- to utilise the opportunity to mobilise them for social education and collective responsibility.

Target Group
The category of women the programme aims to reach consists mainly of middle-aged working-class women, of intermediate and lower castes including scheduled castes. They are married women running small independent enterprises to supplement their incomes. They are all located in working-class areas, running one specific type of enterprise - food preparation.

Organisational Features
In order to attain the objectives, groups (*mandals*) were organised. The membership of these is by an entrance fee of Rs.2 with a monthly subscription of Rs.1. This collection is kept as a fund to be used for covering travel charges and part of the rent paid for premises used for conducting the affairs of the group. Usually, membership is through introduction by existing members with approval by the Managing Committee. The organisation of the group has three levels: the general body, the Central Committee and the Managing Committee. Both the Central Committee and the Managing Committee are elected bodies and consist of the self-employed women. Honorary members may be permitted through the recommendation of the Managing Committee but such members have no vote. The Secretary does the work of liaison, advice, etc., assists in all difficulties and helps maintain records, etc. There is only one paid help - a girl (paid Rs.100 per month) who assists in the collection of repayments; otherwise no honorarium or salary is paid to anybody.

Loan Facility
Any woman who wishes to obtain a loan must become a member of the mandal. Any woman who has at least ten boarders can apply for a loan. The ceiling for the initial loan is Rs.1500. Later loans can go up to Rs.2000. The only surety is that of hypothecation of "provisions". For a Rs.1000 loan, repayment is by monthly instalments. When an instalment is paid, Rs.60 is taken for repayment of the loan and Rs.10 goes to a compulsory savings deposit scheme. Each woman receives a pass book and account book wherein stamps of different colours for different amounts are affixed, to denote her debit/credit position. Though illiterate, she can quickly learn to keep accounts. Interest charged up to Rs.1500 is 4 per cent. If the amount is more, rates are higher, the highest being 15 per cent. Repayment is collected by the bank representative, who contacts the area President every month. This is to save the women the trouble of going to the bank. They have no time for this.

The area committee is from among the working women. An area committee is formed and loan facilities are given when there are at least twenty members in an area. The committee contacts all the other members of the area, collects repayments and loan applications, and keeps records. Where there are new areas joining the group and the members are few, a bank agent may not go for collection. In such cases the members go to the nearest area office. There are eleven area committees responsible for processing loans, collecting loan applications, collecting repayment, etc. The bank agent sits in each area once a month, on an assigned day. There are three bank agents exclusively assigned for Annapoorna Scheme, working in these eleven areas. The bank has a turnover of Rs.6 million as a result of this scheme, the monthly repayment running to Rs.100,000.

All the members have taken loans. The rate of recovery is 98 per cent. The defaulters are in abnormal situations: death or disability. About a quarter have repaid in full the first loan and are now in the process of repaying their second loan. The loan amount is worked out on the basis of a week's requirement of working capital. The bank processes loans in batches of 25 or so.

Working Conditions

The "small-lunch-home" operator receives Rs.80 per boarder per month. This covers only material charges. The earnings consist of the food saved to feed her own family up to four members. No cash is available as net profit. However, the income of other members of the family can then be utilised for other purchases.

The women work nearly eighteen hours with just a short break at noon. Their work begins at 3.00 a.m. The first session is till noon. The second session begins at 2.30 p.m. and goes on till midnight. Some boarders eat a meal and carry the second meal. The meal provided is chappatis, dal, and vegetables. Each boarder consumes 15-20 chappatis per meal. Each operator requires 20-30 kgs of wheat per day. The meal served is adequate in terms of quantity but not in quality. The factory workers have to fall back on cheap "lunch-homes" and poor quality food, cooked in unhygienic surroundings, because there are no welfare provisions for them either from the factory or from the state. Twice a week, mutton and eggs are cooked, but this is on request from boarders who bring these things to be cooked. Leftovers are given to the children. The relationship is highly personal. Often boarders' wives may be given lodging accommodation. Once a year boarders present a gift to the *khanawali* (food woman).

The purchase of provisions for meal preparation is made individually. Three or four women may go together to do the marketing. They do not engage anyone else for the shopping or for porterage. Though pooled buying may save time, they have not attempted it out of fear of misappropriation. If a woman falls sick, she seeks the assistance of others. There is a high degree of solidarity.

From the point of view of boarders, the meal is very cheap compared with what they would have to pay in a hotel. Their individual requirements of food are met, but it must be remembered they meet survival needs at a low level.

By and large,the possibility of boarders defaulting on their dues to the women meal-providers has been kept under check because of the intimate contact members of the mandal have among themselves. They come to know about any defaulter quickly and will not take in such a person. Undercutting is eliminated. If a woman defaults on her repayment to the bank, the area

committee pulls her up and tells her how she is ruining the reputation of the mandal as a whole There is high motivation to retain prestige through this method.

Other Services Provided by the Mandal
In addition to access to credit, services like accident compensation, social-cultural activities and literacy classes are also provided by the mandal. Creches and *balwadis* are at present not feasible because of the problem of space. As it is, the women's living quarters are dreadfully overcrowded.

LIMITS TO EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAMME

There is a limit to the scale of operation of each member because of the high proportion of working capital needed and the non-availability of labour. Only family labour is employed. The amount of labour involved depends on the number of adult relatives available. They take only two days off in a year, 15 August and 26 January. They cannot afford to take days off. There is a ceiling to the scale of operation; not more than 30 boarders per woman can be taken if she works alone.

The programme has expanded rapidly and the women by and large act as an identifiable group with *esprit de corps*, though family concerns are predominant and patriarchal values survive. These values may conflict with those of the programme. Because they are organised in committees, the women get the chance to discuss their needs and they air their suggestions freely. As a result of the need perceived by the women, the group has proposed building a centre. Donations of Rs.50 to Rs.100 are being collected for the building fund. The idea is to provide employment for members' relatives who have no place of their own. They want to try packed lunches for office-goers.

The organisation, being area-based, can expand considerably. The optimum is set by the nature of the enterprise. As each woman works independently, with her own tools, in her own house, with her own and her family's labour, a limit is set by the availability of labour and space.

Limits to expansion are also set by the small margin of net profit. Thus, while there are savings to buy vessels and improved storage facilities, additional investment in the scheme is likely to be low. Much of the savings are used for the purchase of durable consumer goods. For the social functions of the group, collections of Rs.5 are made from each member.

COMMENTS ON THE PROGRAMME

Possibly, the major success of the programme is in its democratic functioning, without much official sponsorship. The scheme is successful because it is built on an existing productive organisation. Because the members act as a group and not as individuals, financial aid is immediately possible and it is easier to get institutional credit. Hundreds of small borrowers cannot be reached individually by the banks.

The second distinguishing feature is that the scheme has not involved any displacement or dislocation of any sort. The women's method of operation has been retained and their independence preserved.

Thirdly, unlike most loan schemes, this one has restricted the amount that can be loaned and built in a scheme of regular repayment through monthly instalments. Only when an initial loan is repaid can a second one be taken. The scheme has a compulsory savings deposit scheme. The investment per member works out to Rs.70 per month per boarder.

Many women have repaid their first loan and gone in for a second loan. The savings have definitely increased. Each household has visible additions to its assets. As expenses on food are saved, the cash incomes of other earning members have gone to improve the family's welfare. Children of all the families go to local municipal schools. The impact on mortality and fertility is hard to assess within such a short time, but there is awareness of family planning.

Problems

1. While there is definite improvement in the standard of living, there is a tendency to imitate the conspicuous consumption styles of the well-to-do. Less is spent on health needs than could be, while expenditure on clothes and jewellery has gone up. Awareness needs to be built up of alternative, more productive investment. Some effort is put into providing education on health, hygiene, etc. but the women's lack of time means that they cannot receive this more than once a week or so, and do not even achieve that regularly.

2. Expectations have been raised. Again and again, the women have said that they did not want to continue in their occupation. They want to do "something better". They do feel that what they are doing is of less status compared to a white-collar job. When their daughters grow up, they do not want them to work in this occupation; they aspire to white-collar jobs and do not want to be factory workers. Whether or not these aspirations can be met remains to be seen.

3. The success of the scheme is based on serving boarders who are in the same neighbourhood. They cannot charge higher prices as this class of boarder would not be able to afford more. While this is good, it also emphasises the women's immobility; their work ties them to a particular neighbourhood.

4. Diversification is not possible as the scheme is at present operated. If the women were to take on some other activity, they would have marketing, transport and packing problems because they would not be supported by the programme.

Possible Improvements

Perhaps some improvements could be made in the technology used. For example, rolling chappatis takes an enormous amount of time and the labour input is inordinately high. It may be possible with improved means to purchase other equipment to roll out chappatis without much effort. Secondly, if some low cost refrigeration were possible, the women could be spared cooking several times in the day. Investment on refrigeration would possibly be worthwhile if done on a cooperative basis. The cost factor in relation to a possible increase in productivity needs to be worked out. Perhaps this is where the programme might expand its help.

Conclusion

It should be remembered that in the long run, work opportunities and productivity are related. In the absence of some means by which productivity can be raised, motivation to continue working will be absent because returns will continue to be low - too low to justify the effort the women put into the scheme.

This is of special significance for women, for greater productivity may mean less need for additional labour. Fewer children may be needed and family planning may be practised. But as long as the cost-benefit ratio is

in favour of additional children, the appeal of family planning will remain weak. Family planning opens for women choices beyond motherhood. In the urban set-up, where they are exposed to the mass media, where there is overcrowding and the need for schooling for children is realised, in the relatively well-to-do working-class families, family planning is more likely to be practised. However, other factors such as inadequate health and nutrition, infant mortality, and the need for children as old-age security may be disincentives to family planning. When asked why she did not go in for family planning, one woman member of Annapoorna said, "Guarantee that my son will live; then I will not have another child."

JYOTI SANGH: TRAINING FOR SELF-RELIANCE (AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT)

INTRODUCTION

One of the major forces which led to the awakening of women and inspired them to play a significant role in the political, economic and social development of the country was the call from Mahatma Gandhi to participate in the freedom movement in the late twenties and thirties of this century. Gandhiji believed that the country could not progress unless the women, who formed half the population of the country, were educated, were emancipated from poverty, casteism and narrow conservatism, and gained economic independence to strengthen their self-confidence. His was a tremendous effort to create among the people of the country an awareness for the need to respect every woman as an individual whose dignity had to be upheld.

Imbued with this spirit and charged with the tremendous motivation that Gandhiji generated, a large number of women's groups both in the cities and the villages sprang up and developed through the years. The basic direction of these groups was provided by the Gandhian philosophy of service to society, self-sacrifice, a feeling of brotherhood irrespective of caste, creed or language, and a belief in simplicity based on the ideal of plain living and high thinking. The years 1930 to 1947 could be described as an era of great awakening amongst women and the recognition of human rights in the history of this country. During this period a large number of women participated in the freedom movement and fought shoulder to shoulder with men by suffering atrocities and long spells of imprisonment. These were women with family responsibilities who came from all walks of life - the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the old and the young, from all castes and religions. With all these differences they had one thing in common: untiring zeal, great dedication and selfless devotion to the cause of freedom and the emancipation of women.

During this period a number of small organisations came into being. These organisations were engaged in different types of activities such as social service to the needy through health programmes, educational programmes, skill training for women through spinning and weaving. Each organisation concentrated on different facets of these various socially useful activities according to the capabilities and skills of its members and the need of the area in which they worked. Hundreds of such organisations run by women grew up, sometimes with the initiative of the grassroot-level workers in the villages and sometimes with the social workers from urban areas.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF JYOTI SANGH

One such organisation which has made a major contribution to raising the quality of life of women through non-formal education programmes is the Jyoti Sangh of Ahmedabad in Gujarat in Western India.

Ahmedabad is the capital city of Gujarat, situated on the River Sabarmati and with more than a hundred textile mills, is the textile centre of India. Mahatma Gandhi established a famous Sabarmati Ashram in this city

where he lived and worked for the freedom of the country. For this reason, Ahmedabad was always in the forefront of the struggle for Independence. A number of voluntary organisations started functioning in which dedicated men and women worked for the social amelioration programme outlined by Gandhiji.

The Jyoti Sangh was established on 24 April 1934 by Smt. Mridulaben Sarabhai and others under the inspiring leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. On 29 June 1934 this organisation was officially inaugurated in a very simple manner by Mahatma Gandhi who in his inaugural message said, "Jyoti means light. Just as one candle can light another, may the efforts of the members give light to the whole society. Go to the poor and spread light in their homes." With humble beginnings the Jyoti Sangh started functioning from the homes of some of its active workers. It has to its credit about 50 years of continuous social service and has provided educational and training facilities for women of all ages.

Since Ahmedabad was an industrial city, it had a large labour population of men and women. Women were exploited as in most parts of the country and were illiterate and needed not only economic support but also education and health services. In the earlier years, the members of the Jyoti Sangh concentrated their attention on creating an awareness among the people to remove injustices against working women and demanded equal pay for equal work for women.

The Jyoti Sangh received both financial and intellectual support from a number of forward looking and progressive men of the time including lawyers, industrialists, educationists, doctors and prominent social workers.

The four main objectives of this organisation are:

- to develop self-confidence and self-reliance in women; to make them fearless citizens; to develop their physical, mental, intellectual and industrial capabilities;

- to promote the feelings of national integrity, fraternity and secularism, and to remove the differences in castes and creeds and thus make women courageous;

- to enable women to come out of the four walls of their homes and take an active part in building up the nation, working shoulder to shoulder with men in the advancement of the nation;

- to fight age-old traditions and orthodox customs which are derogatory to women and hamper their progress.

The activities of the Jyoti Sangh were guided by an executive committee elected by its members. The following three divisions were set up by the Jyoti Sangh to look after its various activities: the Management Division, the Rahat (rescue and relief) Division and the Education and Training Division.

Management Division and its Activities

This division was set up to coordinate with and study the tools and techniques employed by other social organisations of Ahmedabad and Gujarat, to conduct seminars,conferences etc., and by doing so, to mobilise public opinion and bring about a change in social attitudes, to carry out relief work at times of natural calamities and to provide consumer protection. Its activities include the following.

Family Welfare

Under this section Jyoti Sangh conducts four main activities:

1. Child-care centres and creches: between 1947 and 1980 more than 700 children have taken advantage of this facility.

2. A training centre for mentally retarded girls with an annual intake of forty girls.

3. Family planning centres: about 70,000 persons in the Kalupur Centre and Rajpur Centre have been given assistance in this programme in various ways.

4. City family welfare centres and social welfare activities in slum areas have placed 1446 children in the *balwadis* (kindergartens) and 2382 women have been enrolled in hobby classes. The hobby classes were specially meant for women who had minimal education or were illiterate.

Production and Sales

For women who were not capable of having any other training and who needed to earn their own living, a new programme of supplying snacks from the kitchen to different institutions, clubs and families was undertaken. In this department 175 persons are supplied daily with fresh snacks.

The Jyoti Production Centre gives remuneration to about 300 women who are employed in production work in the supply of necessary commodities to hospitals, institutions, and government and semi-government organisations.

Jyoti Sangh Consumers Cooperative Stores sell raw materials for embroidery and tailoring and also take orders from customers which are passed on to the needy women. It helps them to earn their livelihood.

The special and unique feature of all these activities of Jyoti Sangh is that it insists on maintaining the quality of all the products, including food products, prepared in its different divisions. No product of Jyoti Sangh is put for sale in the market unless it is passed by the standards committee. The sale of these products is made through various outlets like Jyoti Vastu Bhandar, Khadya Bhandar, Jyoti Consumers Cooperative Store, etc.

Employment Exchange

Jyoti Sangh Employment Exchange sends about 250 women for catering to dinner parties for which these women are specially trained. It also gives employment to women who are trained in different handicrafts as well as arranging for placements for jobs in private homes, social welfare organisations, nursing, etc.

Jyoti Sangh Employment Exchange publishes a quarterly *Jyoti Sangh Patrika* which keeps its members informed about the job opportunities available as well as the activities of the Sangh.

Apart from these major activities, there are many other short-term activities organised by the Jyoti Sangh. Prominent among these are classes for cultural uplift including visits to historical places and to various educational and cultural institutions. There are classes for cooking, yoga, and food and nutrition. Last but not least, libraries are set up which cater not only for the educated women but also for the neo-literate women.

In order to expose the women to the latest trends in education, the arts and the social and political scene in the country, a series of lectures by prominent speakers was organised by the Jyoti Sangh. Their purpose was to focus the attention of women on subjects such as the legal and political status of women, the position of women in the home, rural women in development, child care and modern scientific technology.

Rahat (Rescue and Relief) Division

Social discord, intolerance, economic problems, superstition and outmoded customs lead to social problems. Not only in Gujarat, but all over the country, the Sangh has earned a reputation for trying to eradicate these. The Division tries to see that women get a respected position in society, to make them independent persons contributing to the shaping of the nation's destiny and leading it towards prosperity.

Since its inception the Division has been receiving about 2500 to 3000 cases a year on different problems. Nearly all cases are settled through compromises. Some cases have perforce to be given up, whereas in about 5 per cent of cases the Division has to resort to legal measures. A sub-section of this Division is the family counselling centre which deals with cases requiring psychological help and understanding.

TABLE 1

Some of the Cases Brought to the Rescue Department for Help

Type of case	*In 1979-80*	*From 1937 to 1979*
Family feuds	780	24114
Beating and assault	143	8688
Divorce	59	2218
Bigamy	28	1268
Miscellaneous	78	4830
Child marriage	1	2936
Running away from the house	4	809
Kept women (concubines)	20	772
Prostitution	3	899
Maintenance	1	237
Desertion	2	511
Total	1119	48360

Various methods are adopted for solving these cases through compromise, offering legal aid, getting police help, assisting in obtaining divorce, coordinating with other institutions, sending them to *Vikasgrah* (rescue homes). Every month more than 100 women take advantage of Rahat Division for solving their problems.

Education and Training Division

This Division provides facilities to women to enable them to read and write, to keep accounts and be well informed about the world at large. The Division teaches them at least one craft to earn their living and to stand on their own feet. Women from Ahmedabad and other neighbouring villages avail themselves of the services of this Division and about 800 to 1000 women are trained every year. In nearly every village of Gujarat one finds a woman trained by Jyoti Sangh. To date more than 25,000 women have been trained in this Division.

The educational activities of the Jyoti Sangh were in the beginning concentrated on adult education. Adult education did not just end in the teaching of the "three R's". It tried various means of training neo-literate women so that they could be of financial help to their families and, if need be, economically independent. They were taught to make clay toys, envelopes and files, to weave and to make spices used in cooking, etc. The Sangh also helped them to sell these products by contacting different traders or families who used these products regularly. A new step in this direction was to train a band of women in catering for big formal dinners. In addition to the non-formal element of education, the Jyoti Sangh also provides schooling from pre-primary through to high school. Jyoti Sangh today runs special classes for learning English and for training in social work. In the fine arts section, courses are offered in drawing, leather work, framework, batik, hand printing, cane work and toy making. The music section of the Sangh gives training in classical vocal music, instrumental music and light music. Students sit the Certificate examinations of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya of Ahmedabad and the J.J.School of Arts in Bombay.

A number of classes are organised in fine arts and music. Jyoti Sangh also conducts classes in sewing, embroidery and fancy work, Gujarati and English typing and shorthand and accounts for secretarial work, and spinning and weaving. The training is recognised by well known institutions like the Indian Merchants' Chamber. Stipends are provided for women in need of support. For the various training programmes, the Jyoti Sangh has been fortunate in having dedicated and devoted teachers who have distinguished themselves in public and political life.

Women are taught how to use and look after modern household equipment in classes. In addition, child care, food and nutrition, dietetics, elementary embroidery and the treatment of common ills are taught in these classes. Women are also given training in hand and machine knitting. A well stocked library is provided by the Jyoti Sangh to help its members. The organisation gives awards and honours to women who have spent their lives in living up to the ideals of social service inspired by Mahatma Gandhi.

AN EVALUATION OF JYOTI SANGH'S WORK AND ITS IMPACT

In the beginning the organisation had to face opposition from vested interests, society, government, and women themselves. But slowly women began to come to the organisation and join in its activities. In acknowledgement of the good work done by Jyoti Sangh for the people and the nation, it has received the guidance and assistance of Gandhiji, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel.

In the formative years, at the time of the struggle for Independence, devoted women from well known elite families participated and took the initiative. This cleared the way for women from middle-class backgrounds.

From 1934 to 1980 the Jyoti Sangh has tackled various social problems. Sex discrimination still prevails in the treatment of boys and girls, and of men and women. There is also an unwelcome amount of child marriage and sale of brides or bridegrooms. In continuing its attack on these, Jyoti Sangh has adopted a revolutionary attitude, and as a result women are now more alive to these problems of social injustice.

Together with creating awareness the organisation has given non-formal education and skill training which has succeeded in making a number of women self-reliant, self-sufficient and self-confident. As a result, women have been elected to the municipality and Parliament and have held key positions in social and political life.

Finance and Management

In the early days the organisation faced great economic problems. Even a meagre sum of Rs.10 or 15 paid to the voluntary workers could not be found easily. Though funds were minimal, the devoted group of willing workers made it possible for the Jyoti Sangh to carry on the work of the organisation.

Since Independence the central and state social welfare boards' grants have made it possible to carry on the work and gradually expand its activities.

The organisation is managed by women who are educated and experienced. Its executive committee has a majority of women members. Today about 100 honorary workers give their time and energy to the Sangh. A chart detailing the activities of the Sangh is appended.

Future Plans

A special training programme for rescue work is envisaged in the near future. It is planned to organise this work through a number of camps in different parts of Gujarat. Some of the burning problems which come in the way of women's programmes, such as dowries and child marriages, are to be tackled by the Jyoti Sangh in the near future.

A plan is under way to help women to set up small-scale industries by building an estate for small-scale industries for them.

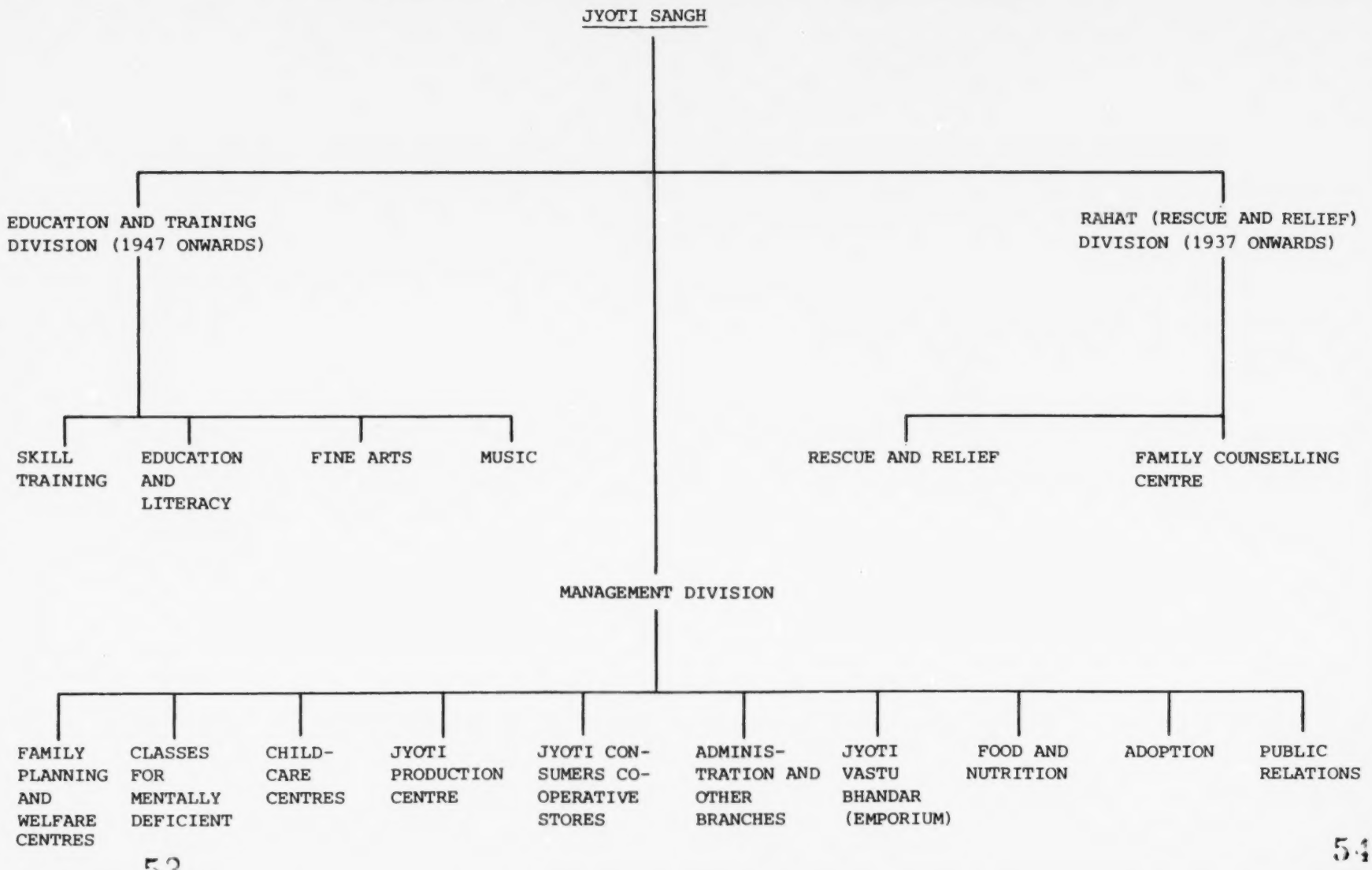
It is intended to undertake the preparation of audio-visual materials and to present one-act plays and puppet shows to bring home effectively important messages for the betterment of rural women.

The Sangh proposes to undertake research on various problems concerning women and make an impact study of the work it has done for the last 50 years.

CONCLUSION

To meet the demand of thousands of women, the Jyoti Sangh is planning to open more centres in the city of Ahmedabad as well as in the State. The unique feature of the Jyoti Sangh is that it has not stagnated into a rigid traditional organisation with limited vision. It has contributed effectively to the all-round development of women and has added new dimensions to its activities over the years.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF JYOTI SANGH THROUGH THE YEARS



UNIVERSITY NATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE UNITS: PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, NIRMAL VILLAGE (MAHARASHTRA)

INTRODUCTION

A number of programmes were carried out throughout India by the National Social Service (NSS) Units of the different universities for non-formal education in urban and rural areas. One such project was started in 1974 by the students of the SNDT Women's University, the only Women's university in India. They adopted a village called Nirmal, the home of one of the students, and worked for the economic and educational uplift of women.

Location and Economic Background

Nirmal Village is a small village in Bassein Taluka, Thana District, Maharashtra, which is about 45 km north of Bombay and is accessible by the Western Railway. The population of the village is about 800 out of which about 250 to 300 belong to the scheduled caste/scheduled tribe groups. The total area is 88 acres out of which 56 acres constitute the lake area.

Nirmal has no industries, small scale or large scale, except for a sawmill which is a centre for wood cutting, making planks etc. It is a very lucrative business for the owner. Fish tanks are a major source of income for whoever happens to lease the tank for a year. The majority of the people are from lower economic groups, namely the Harijans and Adivasis. They go to the fields and work as casual labourers whenever work is available. Among Adivasis and Harijans the literacy rate is very low. In the whole Adivasi community, only two boys have so far passed the Secondary School Examination. There are two high schools in the village, one run by Christian missionaries and the other by the Barve Education Society of Bassein. By contrast, in middle-class society, women have leisure time which they use to visit friends while their men find politics a favourite pastime. Most of them have education up to secondary level.

THE PROJECT - ORGANISATION AND ACTIVITIES

During the vacation 30 students of the University camped in the village and helped the women of the village by conducting health education programmes, and created an awareness about nutrition. They set up a Women's Organisation in the village called *Mahila Mandal*. They chalked out a useful programme for the village. They started a nursery for children and organised a free medical check-up with the help of the Nursing College of the University.

A skills-training programme was started under the auspices of a *Gramin Stri Sahayak Mandal* (village women cooperative society). They organised seminars for farmers and guided the women of the village in the preparation of packed lunches and snacks for picnickers, since Nirmal Village has a beautiful environment and is a picnic spot. Skill training for women for the preparation of *agarbattis* (incense sticks), seasonal masala powders, soap etc. was also organised to help the families in the village to generate income. They continually added to their activities. This helped the women to supplement their income and thus raise their standard of living. It also brought together women of all sections of society in Nirmal Village. They initiated the construction of a well for the people and planted fields and kitchen gardens.

Experts in larger industries were invited to help in the training programme. The women earn on an average Rs.10 a day. These activities raised the expectations of these women and they made a request for further facilities such as:

- a free reading room,
- two libraries for women,
- a health centre for check-up of women,
- a tailoring school for women,
- encouragement to deserving students by giving them prizes and fellowships,
- construction of homes for homeless (about 100 homes were constructed during two years with material obtained from the Government);
- seven centres for adult education and literacy.

To meet the rising aspirations of the women of the village, some of the women took up the work of organising canteens, or contracts for supplying meals. They cooked these for groups that went out on tour in trains. These women, in addition to cooking and serving nutritious food, were paid Rs.600 to Rs.700 per month as kitchen managers. They organised a rural conference in which about 1000 women participated from the neighbouring area. It created a consciousness among these groups for improving the quality of their life, better health, better agricultural practices. The local Gram Panchayat gave a free plot of land to the organisation, and now for seven or eight years the organisation has been doing good work.

Services Provided

Balwadis, Mangal Van and Madhu Van

Two *balwadis* (creches) were started at two villages, namely Nirmal and Bhilgaon three miles from Nirmal. A total of 60 children attended from all sections of society. A suitable teacher was appointed and a clear-cut role was assigned to various participants. Panchayats of both the villages took up the financial responsibilities. The fees charged from children were nominal, only Rs.2 per month. During one vacation NSS students made teaching aids for the use of the balwadis.

Medical Facilities

The Adivasis of the village had practically no medical facilities and they could not afford the fees of the private doctors and those of the missionary hospital. Swami Shraddhanand had an incomplete hospital building and was on the lookout for personnel to run it. An out patient department and dispensary were set up with the help of a city hospital. About 600 people from Nirmal and neighbouring villages took advantage of this treatment. Once a month operation camps were organised. The NSS students did the clerical and administrative work and at times substituted for paramedical staff as well. For six to seven months this scheme went on very smoothly. However, owing to differences of opinion regarding the management of the newly established hospital, the project had to be discontinued. Though this disheartened everybody the one redeeming feature that emerged was that the Panchayat and villagers have realised the need for a hospital and a clinic and are determined to bring up one with their own efforts.

Udyog Mandir and Udyog Van

From past experience it was evident that women were not interested in mere cultural activities of Mahila Mandal but in something more concrete. They were encouraged to get together and form a kind of cooperative society which would eventually yield them some monetary returns. Formalities for registration of such a society are under way. Meanwhile the women have organised themselves to offer a catering service to the picnickers or any other groups visiting the village.

Tailoring is the next activity to be undertaken by the women's Udyog Mandir. On their behalf we are carrying on negotiations with a large hospital in Bombay to place an order for making uniforms for the hospital staff and patients. Efforts are being made for procuring loans or donations to buy a number of sewing machines.

Building Homes for Landless Labourers

Last summer, our NSS volunteers, under a 20-point programme, built 51 homes for landless labourers of three villages, Nirmal, Gaas and Madras. The Maharashtra Government gave free land and provided each family with materials worth Rs.600 to build the homes. Land given to each family is a plot of 30 square feet and the houses are built on plots of 10 square feet. We began to get grants from the government and then, through the Panchayat, enlisted the help of villagers to level the land and build the homes. The new colony is named Sahajeevan Vasahat and the occupants have also received the legal entitlement to the land (*sanad*).

Future Programmes

Providing Amenities for the Newly Built Colony

- Digging a well as there is a scarcity of water in Nirmal Village.
- Teaching the occupants of the colony to construct soak-pits, latrines etc. for sanitation purposes.
- Planting trees along the roadside of the colony.

Agricultural Conference

A conference is to be held for discussion and demonstration of some of the problems faced by farmers. A survey has been conducted to identify major problem areas in farming. The help of agricultural experts is being sought on this subject.

Technical Education for Youth

Despite two high schools in the village, very few students go for higher education especially from the Adivasi group. They seem to be interested in more job-oriented technical education. The possibilities of having a technical education section at either the high school or separately are being explored.

OBSERVATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE PROJECT

In the initial stage, the village women showed indifference and sometimes resentment towards the activities of the university students but soon rapport was established and the community came forward to cooperate and participate in the village development programme. It was not only a time-consuming job but it demanded dedication and sacrifice on the part of the students. The experiment suffered a setback in the initial stage when a number of women students were not able to adjust to the needs of hard work and dedication demanded by the project. Where students are participating, it is more appropriate to hold the programme during the vacations when the colleges are closed and they can do intensive work in the village.

An effort was made to develop leadership at the village level. This was a very healthy thing to do because the active participation of the people themselves accelerated development as well as reducing the village's dependence on the work done by the university. Adoption of villages on the lines of the scheme operated by the National Social Service Units of Colleges and Universities has been gaining momentum in India.

The experience of group living in camps and working with a totally strange group of people enriched the students and led to their emotional and social development. It gave them a feeling of being responsible citizens contributing to national development and made their education more relevant and socially useful.

RURAL FUNCTIONAL LITERACY PROJECTS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

INTRODUCTION

A major thrust to India's rural functional literacy programme was given in 1977 when the National Adult Education Programme was launched, to begin on a nation-wide basis in 1978. A field study of one of these programmes in the Chatroo Blocks in Jammu and Kashmir was undertaken.

Chatroo Block in Jammu and Kashmir is situated in extremely difficult terrain; the centres having been located in rugged, inaccessible and backward areas of the district. This has affected the efficiency of the supervision of adult education centres. The topography of the area is such that the centres remain cut off from the outside world during the long winter months due to heavy snow and lack of communication links. Another peculiar characteristic of the area is that the majority (60 per cent) of the population of the district move to highland pastures with their cattle and livestock or go out of the districts to work as labourers with the forest contractors for some five or six months each year. In the case of the former, the population is scattered, thus making it difficult for learners to assemble at a particular point. The migratory character of the population affects the continuity of the learning programme.

A characteristic feature of the people, particularly the women, is that from a very young age they show a natural talent for handwork and handicrafts. Therefore handicrafts form part of the adult education centre activities, particularly at the female centres.

Bilinguism is another characteristic of the area of study. Some centres use only Hindi, others use Urdu, while there are some that offer courses in both Hindi and Urdu. This bilinguism also has its effect on the learning process.

The Rural Functional Literacy Project in the Kishtwar-Chatroo Blocks will have to be appreciated in the context of its population characteristics, topography and difficulties of terrain. All these factors have a direct or indirect bearing on the implementation of the project.

PROFILE OF THE CENTRES

The problems arising out of the peculiar conditions and characteristics of the learner population and of the topography will be discussed later. Before that, we shall go round the adult education centres visited by the study-team.

1. *Brahman Mohalla*

Smt. Sushila Kumare, a middle-aged instructor at Brahman Mohalla, the women's centre, is a matriculate. She was trained in tailoring at the Industrial Training Institute. She has been running the centre on the verandah of her house since September 1979. She is otherwise unemployed and the honorarium drawn by her as instructor is her only source of income. At the beginning of the course, she had 25 learners enrolled, but at present there are only

eighteen as seven dropped out - four due to marriage, while the other three joined the handicrafts centre run by the State Handicrafts Department.

The learning material provided for the learners includes the primer *Jaan Pahchan*, in Hindi, which is basically meant for children and adopts the primary school methods of learning from alphabets to the construction of words and sentences. The attainments in the literacy and numeracy skills at the centre are fairly satisfactory as the learners can read competently, write short simple sentences, count up to 1000 and do addition and subtraction up to three digits. The learners at this centre also get training in needlework and cutting and stitching of clothes. However they want a sewing machine. The instructor felt that if this was provided, it would attract a greatly increased enrolment. Enquiries from the instructor and learners revealed that no outside agency was helping them to supplement their efforts. Excepting one visit by the block medical lady officer to this centre during the nine months' duration of the course, no other block or village level functionary from any other development department or agency has visited this centre.

As most of the learners in this centre come from households owning land, the womenfolk have some knowledge of different types of agricultural inputs and methods, but their knowledge is not sufficient. They all want officials from the Agriculture or Extension Departments to visit them and instruct them. This would greatly help them to help their menfolk in their fields. Similarly the learners are eager to have knowledge about health and hygiene and proper care of their children and, for this purpose, need the help of the agencies concerned to supplement their knowledge.

2. *Hirayal*

Miss Santosh Kumari, a young girl in Hirayal area is a matriculate and has an ITI training diploma in cutting and tailoring. She also runs the female centre in her own house. She is otherwise unemployed and the honorarium drawn by her as instructor is her only source of income. The learners in this centre have the additional advantage of the tailoring machine, which is provided by the instructor for use by the learners at the centre. The instructor is a very active and enthusiastic worker and seemed to take an interest not for the sake of remuneration but for the love of her work. Several samples of work on paper and cloth were shown to the visiting team along with samples of stitched clothes. Apart from tailoring, the learners' group at this centre has also made certain handicrafts including *Chakkla-Phoori* or *Binaa* (seats made of straw and other locally available floral materials). The attendance at this centre in the register is 21 but the actual attendance, according to the instructors' report, is usually fifteen to sixteen on any day. The centre has run for eight months, having started in October 1979. Four of the learners use the Urdu primer *Jaan Pahchan* while the remaining learners use the Hindi primer. This is a bilingual centre - some learning through the Hindi medium and others through the Urdu medium. While the instructor is conversant in Hindi, she was handicapped by not being fluent in Urdu. However, she is trying to learn Urdu in order to be able to teach in it. While the four students learning in Urdu are handicapped, the literacy and numeracy levels of those learning in Hindi is fairly satisfactory.

3. *Berabata*

Smt. Nirmala Devi, like Santosh Kumari, is a matriculate and ITI trained in calico printing. She runs the female centre in her own house in Berabata. She has also made available to the learners her own sewing machine for tailoring work. She has also put her training in ITI to use by instructing the learners in making handicraft bags and in making *gabbas* (a thick embroidered cloth for table or floor use). The centre has run for six months and has an enrolment of 20 including a couple of elderly women about 60-65

years old. The level of literary at this centre is not as satisfactory as in the other two centres. The learners can write only up to 100 and can do additions only up to two digits. They can all write their own names and short sentences of not more than three or four very simple words. As in the other two centres visited, the instructor and the learners have had no support from any other development department or agency. However, the young instructress does her best to teach literacy and vocational skills. Both instructor and learners expressed their wish to see people from development departments such as Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Health. The two elderly women attending the centre are taken daily to the centre. They said that they are free from all liabilities and enjoy coming to the centre and learning both literacy and functional skills.

4. *Bigana*

Miss Pamila Devi, a young matriculate girl with one year practical training at the handicrafts centre, runs the female centre at Bigana and helps the learners not only in improving literacy skills but also in teaching them handicrafts, particularly the *gabba* work, and in making cloth bags. The centre has been functioning with a regular attendance of students since January 1980. The learners have acquired literacy in reading and writing of alphabets and the construction of short words of two or three letters, and can write up to 50. The progress in literacy, when related to the period the centre has been running, is not up to the desired level. However, the group as a whole, shows a keen interest in improving their functional skills in making handicraft articles,and reveals better social awareness than in some other centres visited. Interestingly, the young learners seem conscious of improving their living standards through planned parenthood, although our interviews with the male learners at the male centres did not discern interest in small family norms.

5. *Panditgaon*

Smt. Vijayalakshmi, a young 1979 matriculate with training in needlework, knitting and embroidery, has been running the female centre at Panditgaon since April 1980. The centre has an enrolment of 20 female learners but usually the attendance does not exceed fifteen or sixteen. As in other centres, the learners are keenly interested in handicrafts and carry on these activities along with literacy and numeracy. At this centre, the learners can count to 50, while their reading and writing skills are quite satisfactory.

6. *Bandarra*

Bandarra has a female centre run by the Handicrafts Department in collaboration with the Education Department. The centre has 25 female trainees out of which 21 are illiterate. The age group of the trainees is fourteen to eighteen years. Each trainee gets a stipend of Rs.60 per month from the Handicrafts Department, out of which Rs.30 is paid in cash every month and the remaining Rs.30 is deposited in an account in the name of the trainee. The only conditions for admission to this centre are that the trainee should be in the age group fourteen to eighteen and should sign an agreement to attend for one full year and then join a workers' cooperative society for the manufacture and marketing of handicraft materials. The amount deposited in each trainee's personal account is pooled at the end of the year and this amount, which is about Rs.800 for a group of 25 trainees, is used as the initial investment by the cooperative society for the purchase of raw materials.

Sales are effected by the Association of Cooperative Societies who in turn sell the goods to State Emporia and other outlets. The Cooperatives' Association sometimes gives advances in the form of cloth or other raw materials to the cooperative societies for special orders.

The daily training period at the centre is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. During this period one and a half hours is set aside for literacy training for the illiterate trainees. The assistant craft mistress is employed at the centre at a salary of Rs.650 per month. She also acts as the literacy instructor, for which she gets an additional honorarium of Rs.50 from the Education Department. The learning materials for the trainees are provided by the Education Department. The learners use, as at other centres, the primer, *Jaan Pahchan* in both Hindi and Urdu. The instructor is not fluent in Hindi but gets help from one of the four Hindi-speaking trainees. The literacy attainments at this centre are the best of all the centres visited. The centre has been functioning for the last three or four months and learners can read short simple sentences at the desired speed. They can count up to 100 and calculate additions and subtractions up to two digits. Their writing skills are also superior to those of the learners at the other centres which the team visited. On the whole, the learners showed as much interest and enthusiasm in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills as in handicraft training. In short, this centre run jointly by the Handicrafts and Education Departments is a welcome innovation in the field of adult education. The homogeneity of the group and its long-term association in a joint economic activity through the cooperative, contribute to the rapid rate of progress in both vocational training and literacy skills.

7. *Seva*

Seva is a male centre run by Mohd. Shahan who is a non-matriculate. This centre has an enrolment of 27 adults, although usually the daily attendance is of the order of fifteen to twenty adults. In the same building the instructor also runs a non-formal part-time education centre for nineteen children of six to fourteen years of age. The instructor gets a remuneration of Rs.100 per month, for both these activities.

By and large, the learners at this centre are older than 35. Those who are younger tend to have jobs with the Public Works Department. Others are engaged in silk making. Occasionally, the centre is visited by technical extension workers who help to improve their silk worms. The departmental officers also visit the centre when produce is ready for sale.

The literacy attainments at this centre are below standard. Only a few learners can count up to 100 and most are unable to do simple additions or subtractions. Writing skills are below the desired level. They have, however, been taught to read and write their names. The group members are aware of their lack of early education and the consequent handicaps they suffer. They are conscious that their village,with a population of about 150, is neglected because access to it is so difficult. They are also conscious that they have been exploited by money lenders who charge exorbitant interest on loans. They all seem eager to improve their functional skills in the occupations in which they are engaged.

8. *Chingam*

This is an exclusively Harijan centre run by a Harijan instructor, Shri Prem Nath, who is a non-matriculate and is by occupation a labourer. He finds time for running the centre as he is perhaps the only person available in the village who is educated up to 8th standard. Most of the learners in this group are employed as labourers in road construction and repair work. However, some of them are also small farmers.

The centre has been functioning since April 1980 and teaches in Urdu. Standards are poor for various reasons including the fact that the centre has not been visited by any field level functionary of any development department or agency, except once by a block development officer, whose visit, according to the students, was a very useful and encouraging experience.

As with Seva, the people of Chingam suffer exploitation by money lenders and shopkeepers. They hope that their education at the centre will be able to save them eventually from exploitation.

Our journey around the adult education centres has been a revealing experience in several ways.

LITERACY ATTAINMENTS

While the literacy and numeracy attainments at the female centres has been, by and large, satisfactory, the same has not been so at the male centres. The learners in the female centres mostly belong to the age group of 15-35, with the exception of a few elderly women observed in a couple of centres. The male learners' groups consisted mainly of learners in the 35-50 age group, with a few in the 15-35 age group. A better rate of progress at the female centres as compared to male centres may be partly due to the relative youth of the women.

The literacy attainment at the female centre in Bandarra run by the Handicrafts Department in collaboration with the Education Department was better than in all other centres visited. The learners at this centre have formed themselves into an active group from the very beginning. They retain their association even after the completion of the craft training and learning courses at the centre. They showed as much enthusiasm in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills as in the craft training. The rapid rate of progress at the centre could be attributed to the economic motivation that is in-built into this group, as well as its homogeneity in terms of age and commitment to the workers' cooperative for the manufacture and marketing of their produce for a period of at least three years.

FUNCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By and large, the learners at both the male and female centres are cultivators and have lands of their own, though they can be categorised as only small and marginal farmers. Quite a number of them also keep cattle or other livestock to supplement their income. Again, the majority of them, particularly the women learners, are engaged in some handicraft to supplement the family income. The female learners at the adult education centres have no doubt been helped in the upgrading of their functional skills in craft work, as the instructors engaged at most of the female centres have had their earlier training in crafts or other vocational skills at the Industrial Training Institute or at the crafts centres. However, the learners have not derived much benefit in upgrading of their professional skills in their main occupations, i.e. farming or animal husbandry. This is partly due to the fact that the visits of the field-level functionaries of the Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Departments to the centres have been few and far between. Except for one male centre visited once by a block lady medical officer, all the centres visited have been neglected in so far as the programme envisaged the functional development of learners through the help of field-level staff of development departments and agencies functioning at the village, block and district levels.

SOCIAL AWARENESS

Mainly because of the lack of interest by the development departments and agencies in the field, the general level of social awareness among the learners has not shown much improvement. However, interestingly, consciousness among the female learners about improving their standard of living and

health through planned families seemed higher than among male learners. The male learners interviewed still seemed to believe in large families as this gave them more family hands to earn. Again, the female learners showed keen interest in learning agricultural methods and inputs, as they did in the improvement of health in their families and their livestock. They would welcome visits by experts to the centres who could help them in improving their family health and living standards or in raising their professional competence. There was a positive response from the learners at all the centres to the idea of having a daily newspaper at the centre to help raise their level of general awareness. All of them readily agreed to make a contribution of 40-50 paise a month towards the cost of a newspaper. In the beginning, the instructor would read aloud the important news from the paper. This would eventually help the learners to get into the habit of reading newspapers by themselves.

TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

Some of the weaknesses observed in the teaching-learning process at the adult education centres visited by the team are as follows:

1. The physical environment leaves much to be desired. Except for the blackboard, the centres did not display any other materials such as wallcharts, posters, publications, etc. to make the environment lively and attractive. Besides, at some centres, even the primers and slates were in short supply; nor were there any workbooks for the learners.

2. The primer used at the centres, namely *Jaan Pahchan* in Hindi and Urdu, is suitable for children at the primary school level but not for adults. The discussions at the State level revealed that the primer, specially brought out for adult learners, entitled *Behtar Zindagi* (Better Life), separately for male and female learners, had already been published but was awaiting formal ceremonial release by the State Chief Minister. There has been a delay in the preparation and publication of the primer suitable for adults. It is hoped that soon this weakness in the programme will be overcome.

3. The teaching-learning process has followed the traditional primary school method of beginning with alphabets and proceeding to the construction of words and sentences. This teaching method is not suitable for adults. It has had a bad effect on the general rate of progress in literacy by the adults.

OTHER PROBLEMS

The peculiar topography and difficulties arising in the remote, hilly, inaccessible and backward areas affect the operational efficiency of the project in several ways. Firstly, it is not possible to adopt a "compact area" approach of locating adult education centres in the district in one or two contiguous blocks. The clusters of villages are widely scattered in vast areas and the population in any single habitation is too small to allow for more than one centre. The project at present has 175 centres. These are distributed in six blocks in addition to the ten model centres alloted to the District Training Institute. The desirability of adopting the compact area approach was discussed both at the district and project levels but, owing to the extreme difficulties of terrain and topography, the departure from the usual compact area approach in the case of this project, was unavoidable.

The topography and the difficulties of the terrain make it extremely difficult for one supervisor to supervise 30 adult education centres

effectively. The public transport system is far from satisfactory. Even when it is available, the bus takes the supervisor to a nearest spot on the road-side and thereafter the supervisor has to trek the long distances through difficult and inaccessible hilly tracks to reach the centre. In areas of such difficult terrain, the standard norm of 30 centres per supervisor is impractical. These norms will have to be relaxed. Twenty centres per supervisor seems reasonable.

Again, the supervisors, in such difficult areas, who have to trek long distances on foot in order to reach their centres, require additional equipment, such as special types of shoes suitable for mountainous regions. The fixed travel and daily allowances admissible to supervisors at present is not sufficient in these areas. It may be desirable to consider giving a hill allowance to the supervisors in these areas in order at least to cover the cost of shoes. However, if that is not possible, the purchase of special types of shoes out of the fixed allowances might be treated as a legitimate additional charge.

The migratory life-style of the population who move to highland pastures with their cattle and livestock for five or six months in a year create special problems in this region. The course at the adult education centre has to be interrupted for five months or so and then restarted when the population comes back to the lowlands. In a few cases, however, when the majority of the learners in a particular centre move to highland pastures in a particular location, the instructor can also move with them and run the centre at the new place. This has happened in some cases but, by and large, the continuity of the programme has suffered. There is perhaps no escape from carrying out the programme in two phases of five months with a gap of five months in between.

REMEDIAL MEASURES

Model Centres

In order to improve the pedagogical and operational efficiency of adult education centres, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has allotted ten adult education centres to each of the fourteen District Institutes of Education set up in each district of the State. One of the District Institutes of Education is located in Kishtwar Block. The team visited this Institute and had discussions with the Principal, Shri D.C.Sharma, and one Senior Master in charge of the Adult Education Cell in the Institute. The Adult Education Cell and the ten model adult education centres had just been started. It was not possible to visit any of these centres but discussions with the Principal of the Institute and members of the Adult Education Cell gave some idea about the planning. The plan is to make the adult education centres models for the district. It is proposed that the resources available at the Institute (film projector, film strips, art materials, workshops, publications, etc. together with training skills) be utilised for improving the pedagogical and operational efficiency of the ten adult education centres. The Institute plans to employ the artists to make attractive wall charts, posters and other visual aids which relate to the teaching-learning materials used at the adult education centres, and to display them prominently at each of these centres.

District Resource Consortium

The plan to create ten adult education centres under the direct charge of the District Institute of Education (DIE) is indeed an innovation and is expected to promote the overall operational efficiency of adult education centres in each district. The Adult Education Cell in each DIE is also expected to help all other adult education centres in the district in the

training of adult education functionaries, in the production of visual materials and in the evaluation and research. In other words, the Institute will act as the district resource consortium for improving the technical and pedagogical efficiency of the adult education centres. The model centres set up directly under the Institute will act as pace-setters for all other centres in the district.

Inter-Departmental Cooperation

Another innovation in the field of adult education in the State is the direct linkage of the adult education programme with two other departments, Handicrafts and Social Welfare. In the State as a whole the adult education programme has been introduced in more than 400 handicraft centres run by the Handicrafts Department. Similarly, it has also been introduced in quite a number of training centres run by the State Department of Social Welfare. As the report on one of the handicraft centres visited by the team shows, this innovation has proved successful in promoting an effective inter-departmental coordination. The Education Department has a highly motivated, captive and homogeneous group of learners for promoting adult education. It provides inputs in the form of an honorarium to the craft instructor and the teaching-learning materials. From the report on the progress of centres visited by the team, the adult education centres, set up under such arrangements of cooperation between the Education Department and the other departments, have shown better progress than the other centres.

Inter-departmental cooperation has also been practised in the training of adult education functionaries by the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Education Department. Since the majority of learners in the district own lands of their own, although small in size, the District Agricultural Officer, in cooperation with the Project Officer for Adult Education, organised a couple of training courses for the adult education functionaries. The Agriculture Department also brought a number of resource persons in the field of agriculture, extension, animal husbandry, health etc. to help the trainees acquire practical knowledge in these areas. The entire cost of the training was borne by the District Agricultural Office; this meant a saving in the financial provision made in the Rural Functional Literacy Programme.

However, the inter-departmental cooperation between the Departments of Education and Agriculture has been confined to the training of adult education functionaries. It has not permeated to the grass-roots level. Few, if any, of the field-level functionaries from either the Agriculture Department or the Departments of Animal Husbandry, Health, and Rural Development have ever visited any of the adult education centres. This neglect has been due mainly to the fact that the District Adult Education Coordination Committee, set up a year ago under the chairmanship of the District Collector, has taken little interest in this programme. Not a single meeting of the Committee was held in its year of existence. This is a matter of serious concern and immediate measures will have to be taken to activate it in order to promote an effective system of inter-departmental cooperation at the district, block and village levels.

Creation of Environment

Steps to create a suitable environment for the adult education programme have been taken at two stages. Firstly, at the time of the initial surveys to decide the location of adult education centres, the surveyors made door-to-door contact and impressed upon the inhabitants the importance of the programme. Secondly, the project staff actively participated at each of the farmers' training camps organised in each block in the district, and capitalised on the presence of a large number of farmers to motivate them to join the

adult education centres set up at various places in the block. Another activity that has helped in the creation of a suitable environment for the programme is the weekly programme entitled *Navilo* (New Light) started by the Jammu Station of All-India Radio in the Dogri language. This weekly programme is relayed every Saturday between 6.30 and 7.15 p.m. and provides extensive interviews with the adult education learners of different centres. The field team visits one centre every week and holds discussions with the learners on different matters regarding their motivation, their progress in learning and the benefits derived from the adult education centres. This radio programme seems to have an impact in creating a positive environment.

No other efforts, however, have been made on a continuing basis. The motivational efforts at the time of survey or at the time of the farmers' training camps have been once-off affairs. The *Navilo* radio programme lasted for about six months and was then discontinued. Besides, this programme was in Dogri while most of the learners at the centres speak either Urdu, Hindi or Kashmiri. What is needed is a continuous and sustained effort on various fronts to motivate ever more persons to join the programme.

OBSERVATIONS

This field study of the Rural Functional Literacy Project in Kishtwar-Chatroo Blocks of the Doda District in Jammu and Kashmir shows the strong and weak points as well as a few problems peculiar to the area. The weak points of the programme relate generally to the teaching-learning process, including the unsuitability of the reading materials provided, the absence of other teaching aids such as teaching charts and supplementary learning materials, the indifference of the field-level functionaries in development departments and agencies towards supplementing the teaching of instructors, and the inadequacy of supervision and guidance for the centres due to lack of communications and difficulties of terrain. All these deficiencies in the programme will have to be overcome by taking immediate corrective measures as suggested above.

The strong points of the programme are, firstly, that almost all the adult education centres, particularly the female ones, are not merely learning centres but learning-cum-vocational training centres; secondly, that the linkages established with the Departments of Handicrafts and Social Welfare make adult education an integral part of the craft and training centres; thirdly, the establishment of the model adult education centres in the district under the aegis of the District Institute of Education; and lastly, the creation of a special cell on adult education in the District Institute of Education, to serve as a district resource consortium for improving the teaching-learning process at the adult education centres.

(Based on data provided by Mr H.R. Gugnani, Assistant Education Adviser, Ministry of Education and Culture, Department of Education, New Delhi, India.)

Case Studies from Bangladesh

INTRODUCTION

Since 90 per cent of the people of Bangladesh live in rural areas, it is appropriate that the five cases described focus on rural women, from the Mothers' Clubs which function over about 25 per cent of the country to the Swanirvar (self-reliance) Movement for training women in leadership skills which has operated in most areas from 1978.

The Indian studies examined in depth the planning and implementation of schemes in specific areas. The Bangladesh studies, in contrast, take a nation-wide view - understandable in a country so recently gaining its independence. Apart from the Jamalpur Project for rural cooperatives run by a non-governmental organisation, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), all are financed to some extent through governmental agencies. The national voluntary organisation, the Jatya Mohila Sangstha (National Women's Development Academy), has governmental finance while the Mothers' Clubs are also managed under the Department of Social Welfare. Both of these schemes exemplify the top-down approach and indeed the Jatiya Mohila Sangstha Study is frank in suggesting that it has failed to meet the needs of rural women and to attract their participation in its activities largely because of its hierarchical structure.

The Mothers' Clubs Scheme aims at helping women in learning income-generating skills based on traditional crafts and extends into nutrition, health and literacy training. It targets on real needs of rural women but suffers from too few skilled instructors and lack of quality control on products made by the women. Two other programmes, the Rural Women's Cooperatives run by the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and the Jamalpur BRAC scheme, appear to point the way forward in that through the cooperative movement they have enabled women not only to learn new skills for income generation, but also to organise themselves for self help, savings and investment.

POPULARISING FAMILY PLANNING THROUGH A NON-FORMAL PROGRAMME - THE MOTHERS' CLUBS

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh came on the world map in December 1971. It covers an area of 55,598 square miles with a population density of over 1400 per square mile. The estimated population is 84.655 million,(1) growing at about 3 per cent a year. The population is heavily concentrated in the rural areas but ironically 45 per cent of the rural households are landless.(2)

The working population (ten years and above) constitutes 70.1 per cent of the total population but only 30 per cent are in the civilian labour force. The remaining 40.1 per cent are housewives and other dependent persons. The poverty of the country becomes obvious from the fact that the per capita income is only Tk.212 (US $ = Taka 17, 1977-78). In the light of this low per capita income, unemployment and landlessness, over 75 per cent of the population of Bangladesh can be considered to be in absolute poverty.

Adding to the problems are the limited education opportunities, high infant mortality, and poor health services. In 1978 educational opportunities were estimated to exist for only 34 per cent of school age children, infant mortality was 140 per thousand, and health services covered only 10 per cent of the rural population.

In order to reach out to the rural disadvantaged people, the Social Welfare Department of Bangladesh launched in 1974 the Rural Social Services Project as a pilot project in 19 rural *thanas* (administrative areas), one in each district. The programmes of the project were and still are directed towards improving the social, functional and income capabilities of the target beneficiaries, identified as children, women, youth and landless tenants, as well as developing the physical facilities needed for overall development of the villages. The projects envisage the organisation of the disadvantaged groups who recognise their needs. On this basis the groups can be formed into units for action with the minimum of outside assistance. The groups would be assisted in organising village committees which in turn would serve as forums for other government departments/agencies as well as vehicles for planning and executing programmes formulated by union *parishads* (elected councils).

To date, the activities of the Rural Social Services Project extends over 40 thanas covering a population of approximately six and a half million. The programme at the thana level is implemented through a thana social welfare officer assisted by eight male and eight female social workers (VSWs). These young men and women serve as change agents, attitude modifiers and linking mechanisms.

As the VSWs are multi-purpose workers they have to undergo training for three months at the In-service Training Centre of the Department of Social Welfare before deployment. Here, they are exposed to the operational mechanics of programmes of other government departments/agencies operating at the village/union level, group dynamics, nutrition, skills of working with people etc. The female workers are high school graduates while the men need

to have two years of college education. The thana social welfare officers, who are postgraduates in social work, not only supervise the work of the VSWs but also maintain a close relationship with different community groups and village committees.

Owing to the non-participation of women in the economic mainstream of the country, many of the development programmes undertaken by the Government fall short of expectations. In addition, the effectiveness of the population control programme has been largely nullified by the non-acceptance of family planning by the majority of rural women. Recognising that economic emancipation is a prerequisite to effective family planning, the Mothers' Club was set up with the following objectives:

- to involve rural women in gainful economic activities and help them improve the quality of life, thus achieving status in the family particularly and society at large;

- to help them develop leadership skills so that they can play the role of change agents in the society;

- to equip them with skills so that they can be self-employed and thereby supplement family income;

- to provide them with functional education so that they become aware of their problems and take necessary steps towards solving them;

- to infuse the idea of family planning through information, education, communication and other supportive services, gradually motivating them to adopt a small family norm.

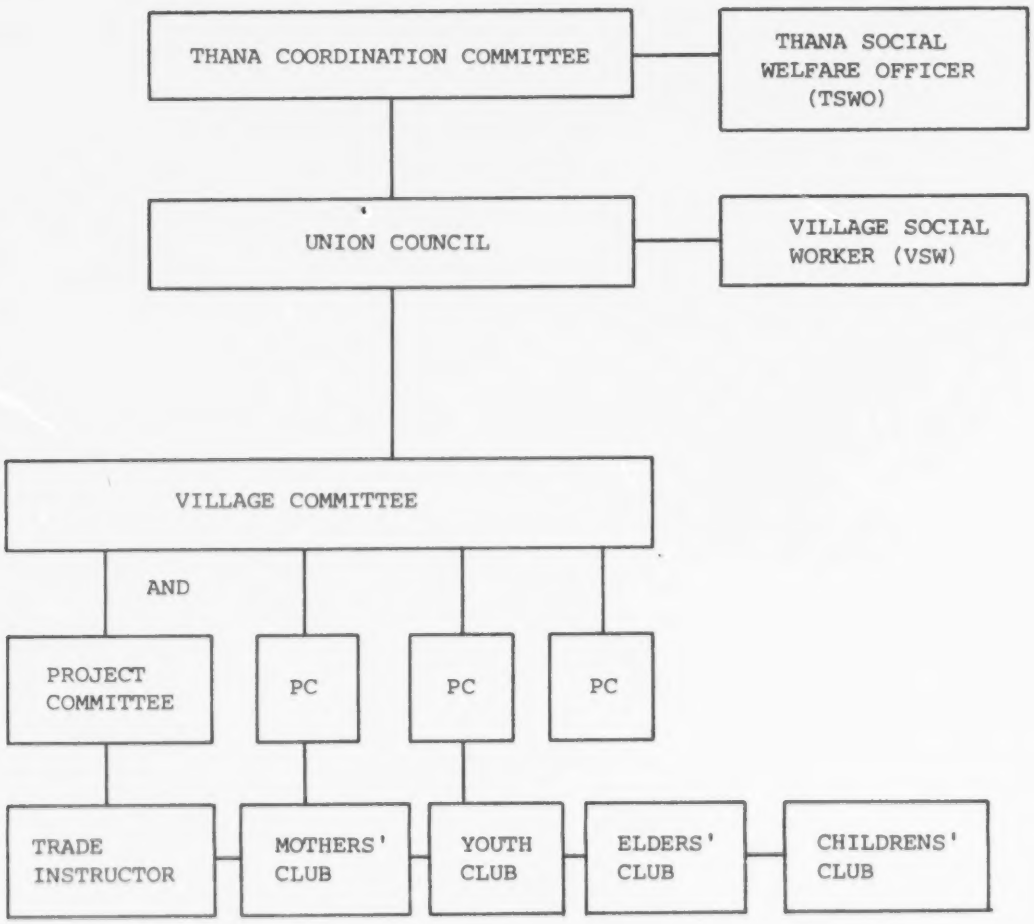
Through a multi-purpose approach, the members of the Mothers' Clubs became aware of their problems, learned skills, developed their income potential and ultimately accepted family planning as soon as they became earning members. It was found that the real moment of a woman's feeling of liberation comes when she touches the money she has earned by her own labour. Earning gives her the opportunity to take part in the decision-making process in the family. Once she is allowed to take part in decision-making, she can contribute a great deal in planning the family, and consequently her fertility pattern changes considerably.

The participants of Mothers' Clubs are today income-generating through different trades such as tailoring, knitting, jute and cane work, embroidery, poultry raising, pisciculture, plastic work, kitchen gardening, coir making, woodwork, rice-husking, fish-net making, mat making and various handicrafts. Since inception, out of 28,084 participants, 12,417 have become regular earning members. Their earnings have amounted to about Tk.2,413,000 since the time they started work. A recent study has indicated that sewing and tailoring are the most popular trades although members have earned more money through jute handicrafts.

To a very large extent the success of the programme is due to the VSWs (half of whom are women) who work as motivators and helpers. Although their training is only for a short spell, it is very practical in nature. Besides the VSWs, about 304 trade instructors (of whom 300 are women) are provided in the project for 764 Mothers' Clubs. Through the trade instructors, 940 sewing machines, 50 radio sets, 326 packets of seeds, 636 items of crockery and 306 pieces of indigenous equipment contributed by government and international agencies have been distributed.

ORGANISATIONAL AND COORDINATIONAL STRUCTURE OF

RURAL SOCIAL SERVICES PROJECT



EVALUATION OF CASE STUDIES

Sutidighalipara Mothers' Club: Gopalpur Tangail
(Combined Project - USAID/Social Welfare Department)

Recognising that population planning cannot be successful without improving the nutritional condition of children and mothers, emphasis in the project was laid on the nutritional aspect of the mothers and children. Considering that infant mortality was 140 per 1000 (0-1 year of age) per year, it was considered absurd to infuse the idea of population planning without taking care of the nutritional aspect. Therefore, it was recommended that nutrition education should be an in-built feature of the Mothers' Clubs activities.

A pilot project was started in Sutidighalipara Village of Gopalpur Thana, entitled "Incorporation of Nutrition Education into Mothers' Club". The project was approved by the Ministry of Manpower Development and Social Welfare on 18 July 1978 and became operational later that month. Its overall objective was to improve the nutritional condition of children and women in Sutidighalipara.

Since then it has been functioning with expert help from USAID. Personnel from the Nutrition Unit of USAID have also taken a keen interest in helping the project to achieve the desired success. Field experience and observation indicate that significant progress has been made; so much so that the project could now be used for demonstration purposes and for large-scale replication.

. The Project has accomplished the following:

-It has elicited major community participation.

-Mothers themselves carry out the child-weighing record on growth charts, and can demonstrate and understand its significance.

-The Mothers' Club members distribute oral rehydration mixture for children suffering from diarrhoea and have been educating women of the village on the home preparation of the mixture.

-Vitamin A capsules are distributed to the young children through the Mothers' Club.

-Education on other aspects of nutrition, like the need for the early introduction of solid food, continued breast feeding, and adequate food intake during pregnancy and lactation, is being undertaken with the help of flip charts.

-Most significantly, there has been a marked improvement in the nutritional status of the children participating.

These accomplishments indicate that the incorporation of nutrition education in Mothers' Club is possible and can lead to highly positive results with minimal input.

For successful replication it should be noted that: there is need for VSWs and representatives of Mothers' Club to undergo one-day refresher courses. The training could be at the thana level and run by the thana social welfare officer along with other officers from the Social Welfare Department and USAID personnel. Also, equipment-packets need to be prepared, one for each Mothers' Club. Each packet should contain: a baby scale, about

75 growth charts, 150 packets of oralyte mixture, 75 vitamin A capsules, and a nutrition flip chart.

*Bhabanipur Mothers' Club**

Bhabanipur is a village situated in the Bhabanipur Union of Sujanagar, in the District of Pabna under the administrative jurisdiction of Rajashahi Division. It lies two miles from the thana headquarters, thirteen miles from the District Headquarters and 82 miles from the Divisional Headquarters. Therefore its environment is totally rural.

Bhabanipur has a population of 955 (490 male and 465 female). There are 120 families in the village, of whom 95 are still capable of producing children.

The distribution of population of the village according to sex and age group are shown in the tables which follow.

Of the 120 families, 45 are landless, while landholdings of 50 families are below 3.00 acres. The per capita income of nearly three quarters of the people is below poverty level**, and 17 per cent of the people are around poverty level.** The work of the villagers is primarily agriculture.

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* This case study was conducted using two questionnaires developed at the headquarters on the guide lines of ESCAP/FAO, as it was meant for use in the national workshop in Bangladesh on income-generating group activities organised by rural women. The first questionnaire, which consisted of 102 questions, was designed to collect information through interviews with members of Bhabanipur Mothers' Club on different issues covering their pre- and post-membership in the centre. The second questionnaire, consisting of 140 questions, recorded answers to the questions on the basis of the thana social welfare officer's work experience, observational impression, information from government sources and local organisations, and records maintained by Mothers' Club.

** Below poverty level - per capita income below Tk. 800
Around poverty level - per capita income between Tk.801/Tk.1300
Above poverty level - per capita income above Tk. 1300
Source: IUCW/BIDS study) (US $ 1 = approx. 18 Takas).

TABLE 1

Population Distribution in Bhabanipur by Sex and Age

Male			*Female*			
Under 15 years	*15 years and over*	*Total*	*Under 15 years*	*15 years and over*	*Total*	*Grand Total*
250	240	490	240	225	465	955

TABLE 2

Distribution of Land Holdings in Bhabanipur

Land	*No. of families*
Landless	45
Below 3.00 acres	50
3.00 acres to 8.00 acres	15
Above 8.00 acres	10

Socio-Economic Condition of the Women

The socio-economic condition of the women of Bhabanipur,as in other areas of rural Bangladesh, is deplorable. In the rural areas, the female labour force is generally fully occupied with household chores. No opportunity for employment of female workers in income-generating activities can be developed in the country because of the existing social and economic constraints.

Before the setting up of the Bhabanipur Mothers' Club, the women of the village never thought of earning money as the men do, to build a better future for themselves and for their children. The married members of Bhabanipur Mothers' Club toiled at household affairs and the unmarried members used to help their mothers with daily routine work before they joined the Mothers' Club. Leisure time, if any, was idled away.

Establishment of Bhabanipur Mothers' Club

In view of the socio-economic backwardness of its inhabitants, the availability of training and production materials, and the scope for fruitful utilisation of untapped local resources, Bhabanipur Village was brought under the Rural Social Service Project of which the Mothers' Club is part and parcel. The Bhabanipur Mothers' Club was set up in October 1975 through local

efforts stirred up by the VSWs for improving the quality of life especially of women.

Plan of Action and Implementation

The programme of the Mothers' Club followed the principles of community development. A package programme of income-generating activities through vocational training, social and functional education, adult literacy, health, nutrition and child care, home keeping, cleanliness, etc. was introduced. Population control was a built-in feature of the programme activities. To ensure the involvement of the community and their participation, the programmes were developed at the community level. No programme was thrust upon the people from above. All the programmes were developed by the village committee and implemented through the Executive Committee of the Mothers' Club. The organisational structure of the village and executive committees was as follows:

Organisational Structure

1. *The Village Committee*

Chairman	:	a member of the Union Council or a social leader	1
Vice-Chairman	:	a member of the Union Council or a social leader	1
Secretary	:	from amongst the members of the Committee	1
Treasurer	:	from amongst the members of the Committee	1
Members	:	one representative each from:	
		1. Mothers' Club	1
		2. Youth Organisation	1
		3. Landless people's organisation	1
		4. Social leaders	1
			8
Advisory Members	:	from amongst the VSWs Representatives of other Nation Building Departments	2

2. *Executive Committee of Mothers' Club*

Chairman	:	from among the members	1
Vice-Chairman	:	from among the members	1
Secretary	:	from among the members	1
Joint Secretary	:	from among the members	1
Members	:	from among the members	5
			9
Advisory Members	:	Village social workers (female)	1

The aims and objectives of Bhabanipur Mothers' Club are:

- to organise the women folk through Mothers' Club;
- to help improve their living conditions through vocational training and income-generating activities, adult literacy, social and functional education, health and nutrition education, child care, cleanliness and home keeping programmes;
- to help them become self-aware, self-confident and self-reliant so that they can help develop their family and a better future for themselves and for their children;
- to help them acquire status in the family and in the society and become economically productive citizens of the country.
- above all, to make them aware of the grim consequences of the population explosion and help them gradually to adopt the small family norm.

TABLE 3

Bhabanipur Mothers' Club Membership by Marital Status and Age

Unmarried		*Married*					
		Husband alive			*Widowed*	*Divorced*	*Total*
Under 15 years	*15 years and over*	*Under 15 years*	*15-49 years*	*Over 49 years*			
2	5	2	17	1	3	1	31

TABLE 4

Bhabanipur Mothers' Club Membership by Socio-Economic Condition

Economic condition	*Number*
Higher income group families	0
Middle-class families (around poverty level)	4
Low income group families (below poverty level)	5
Very poor families (much below poverty level)	22

Evidently a majority of the members lived in abject poverty. Nor was the life of the rest very comfortable either.

Income-generating Activities of Bhabanipur Mothers' Club

Nine trades were developed to help ease the poor women's grim economic hardships through self help efforts. The length of training for these courses ranged from three to five months, depending on the nature and importance of the trades. The types of work and the respective duration of the training are shown in the tables which follow:

TABLE 5

Bhabanipur Mothers' Club: Vocational Trades

Vocational trades	*Numbers*	*Duration of training*
1. Bags of jute cloth	26	3 months
2. Chatni making	8	3 months
3. Garment making (tailoring)	8	6 months
4. Mat/Pati making	7	3 months
5. Biddi making	6	3 months
6. Embroidery	2	6 months
7. Poultry rearing	1	3 months
8. Jute handicrafts	5	6 months
9. Hand fan production	1	3 months

TABLE 6

Bhabanipur Mothers' Club: Training Record

Year	*Number of members trained*
1975-76	9
1976-77	13
1977-78	9
	31

Utilisation of Training in Income-Generating Activities
The production programmes were conducted through the Project Executive Committee. The Committee procured materials with money from the funds under the supervision of the Village Committee and distributed the materials to the production workers according to their skills and capabilities. The workers came to the centre when convenient. They also took materials from the centre for work at home during their spare time. Every worker produced goods to a given sample and design, deposited these at the centre and received payment for them.

Training and Training Equipment
Only two sewing machines had been supplied to Bhabanipur Mothers' Club by the Department of Social Welfare. These were used for training and production activities on jute bags and garment making. The training and production work on the other seven items were done with simple indigenous equipment procured locally out of small contingent funds provided.

Only one part-time instructor was provided under the scheme and she was paid Tk.250 per month. Bhabanipur, like all other Mothers' Clubs, got only 40 per cent of the services of one part-time instructor. Two VSWs had to look after the affairs of as many as five Mothers' Clubs. Consequently, Bhabanipur Mothers' Club got only about one fifth of their time. Taking everything into consideration, Bhabanipur Mothers' Club cost the Government only Tk.300 per month.

Sources of Capital
The Mothers' Club was not conducted in the style of cooperative societies, although the spirit of cooperation was inculcated amongst the members. There was no share distribution in Mothers' Club projects. At the preliminary stage, a small lump sum from the development fund of the Rural Social Service Project was advanced to the Mothers' Club as a loan for initial capital. The capital was raised mainly by subscription from local people and savings out of the earnings of the working participants. Besides these, the International Union of Child Welfare (IUCW) supplied raw materials and received finished goods against supply orders from their agents. The production workers got only the labour charge. The capital for the production work remained, in fact, in the hands of the IUCW.

The production section of Bhabanipur Mothers' Club started functioning initially with Tk.1600 received as a loan from the RSS development fund for purchasing raw materials.

TABLE 7

Bhabanipur Mothers' Club: Sources of Capital Funding

Source	*Amount*
1. Local contribution	Tk. 1800.00
2. Loan from development fund of Rural Social Service Project	Tk. 1600.00
3. Accumulated savings of participants	Tk. 2500.00

Accommodation for the club was provided by local people. IUCW placed orders for finished products as orders came in to them. They supplied raw materials to the Mothers' Club to the value of some Tk.10,000 to 15,000.

Marketing of Products

Attempts were made to develop a marketing system for the products but without success. Moreover, the purchasing ca pacity of the local people was very low. Under the circumstances, goods produced in the centre were sold at a nominal margin in the local market. Goods ordered by IUCW were exported through their agency.

Impact of the Programme

Income of the Participants

Between 1975 and 1978 the production programmes at Bhabanipur earned a total of Tk.23,450. The major portion of this amount represented the cost of labour for IUCW contracts and worked out at approximately Tk.45 per month for each participant.

The major items produced by the participants for IUCW included different types of *shikas* (jute-made device used as a hanger) and other jute handicrafts such as table mats, wall mats, floor matresses, hammocks, etc.

TABLE 8

Bhabanipur Mothers' Club: Range of Monthly Income

Range of income	*No. of centre*
Tk. 1 - 30	11
Tk. 31 - 60	3
Tk. 61 - 90	4
Tk. 91 - 190	12
Tk. 121 - 200	0
Tk. 201 - and above	1
	31

Educational Programmes

Besides vocational training and production programmes, the following educational programmes were conducted:

- functional and social education and adult literacy,
- health education and child care,
- cleanliness and home keeping,
- family planning and population control.

Besides these, different cultural programmes were organised and conducted in the centre occasionally. The above mentioned programmes broadened the horizon of the women and motivated them towards the goal of a better life.

Family Planning

The majority of the 31 members of the Bhabanipur Mothers' Club were married. Of the 24 members who were married, one was divorced and three were widows. Among the married women thirteen had accepted family planning. Of the remainder, two were newly married, four had not yet been blessed with children, while two were already beyond child-bearing age. Those who refused to accept family planning did so because of their husband's resistance, though they themselves were willing to accept.

Education and Change of Attitude

Before joining the Mothers' Club only nine out of 31 members had received elementary education, while 22 members were illiterate. Of the illiterate members all but two could write their names and could also read and write a bit. The other two members were comparative newcomers in the club. The adult members, especially the married ones, did not dare to talk with outsiders or move freely beyond their homes before they came to the centre. Now, as a result of the fact that they are earning, they have gained status in the family and in society, and their attitude has changed remarkably. They have shaken off their shyness and now express themselves freely to outsiders.

Constraints of the Project

It was found from field experience that one part-time instructor cannot do justice to two and a half centres. Her contribution is too little to be of real use and the standard of training given and the quality of resulting production is not up to expectations.

Lack of facilities for marketing the goods produced was a common problem for all the Mothers' Clubs. There is therefore a need for:

- exploration at home and abroad of the market for each product;
- matching production with market demands;
- quality control and standardisation of products;
- convenient and reliable transportation for products to markets;
- revolving funds for capital, with a view to making the production process economically viable and profitable; and
- employment of the right number of suitably trained and skilled staff for effective production.

Notes

1. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (CBBS) 1974, National Volume, page 69.
2. BBS Summary Report of the 1977 Land Occupancy Survey of Rural Bangladesh.

EDUCATING LANDLESS WOMEN FOR SELF-RELIANCE (JAMALPUR)

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is a non-governmental organisation involved in various activities with the objective of contributing to the economic and social development of rural Bangladesh. Founded and run by Bangladeshi nationals, it began in a small way in February 1972. Initially formed to rehabilitate refugees of the liberation war returning to Sulla Thana in the District of Sylhet, BRAC has grown into an organisation with projects and activities in several other districts. The scope of operations has evolved from rehabilitation to integrated rural development, human and institutional development, and the design, testing and implementation of innovative approaches, techniques and methodologies for rural development. The focus of development has shifted from a community approach to the mobilisation and organisation of the poor and disadvantaged sector of the population.

Sectoral programmes such as agriculture, horticulture, pisciculture, animal husbandry, duck and poultry raising, nutrition, health care, family planning services, and functional education are initiated and controlled by cooperative groups of disadvantaged people. The disadvantaged people are made aware of their rights as citizens and then provided with functional literacy to become self-reliant.

The present case study is an example of a project in which the approach has been to promote rural development activities through functional literacy programmes to organised groups of women. Conscientisation and functional education are cardinal features of the project. Women's groups are encouraged to undertake income-generating ventures and social action for their own benefit. Most income-generating activities are initiated through the groups' own savings with substantial credit support from BRAC.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

At present BRAC is involved in two other major projects besides the one at Jamalpur.

Sulla Project

Begun in February 1972, Sulla is the original and still the largest rural development project. Phase I, the rehabilitation programme, ran from February to October 1972 and consisted mainly of a large housing programme (10,200 units) and the rehabilitation of fishermen. Phase II ran from November 1972 to December 1975; in this BRAC was involved in eight sectoral activities, the emphasis having shifted from rehabilitation to the development of rural institutions and infrastructure. In Phase III, the last phase of which ended in December 1980, the focus was changed to the mobilisation and organisation of the marginal farmers in ensuring their participation and control in the process of development.

Manikganj Project

The Manikganj Project began in April 1976. As a result of the experience gained in Sulla it started at a more advanced stage.

The approach in Manikganj has been to promote rural development activities through the formation of groups of the people from the initiating organisation. Disadvantaged women of the community have been brought together to organise themselves into groups.

ORIGIN OF THE JAMALPUR WOMEN'S PROJECT (JWP)

In July and August 1974, Jamalpur District was badly affected by floods. UNICEF's Nutrition Unit responded with a food-for-work scheme to engage in agriculture a large number of women begging in the Jamalpur Town area. The following year, at the request of UNICEF, BRAC provided education for 840 women who had participated in the scheme. It trained fifteen of them to work as functional education teachers in their local areas.

In due course these women teachers along with their learner groups, expressed their keen interest in taking up different village-based women's development work in addition to their functional education classes. They felt that by staying and working together they could solve their problems. What evolved was a plan designed, directed and implemented by women.

Project Area
Jamalpur is a district town, approximately 120 miles north of Dhaka, to the east of the River Brahmaputra. The Jamalpur staff covers 20 villages within a radius of one to five miles of Jamalpur Town. These are the villages where most of the original destitute learners live.

Personnel
The JWP staff operates from an office-cum-dormitory in a rented house in Jamalpur Town. The present strength comprises a Programme Administrator assisted by five Programme Organisers and a Technical Assistant for silkworm production.

Objectives
The main objective of the Jamalpur Women's Project (JWP) is to work with the landless women for their advance towards self-reliance and collective social action.

The target population of JWP is the most disadvantaged of the age group 15-45 in 20 villages of Jamalpur Municipal area. BRAC's basic definition of the disadvantaged is those who have no control over the means of production and distribution; who are landless having no assets and who are selling their manual labour for their survival.

Functional Education
BRAC's functional education, with its problem-posing methodology, is basic to all BRAC development activities. The methodology is based on learners' participation through dialogue facilitated by the teacher, who is not an outsider but is from among the group members. The curriculum centres on real life problems and their possible solutions. The aim of the functional education is not only to make each learner critically conscious of her environment, but also to motivate the learners to take actions which beneficially affect their environment. Functional education, therefore, provides an excellent form for target group interaction and motivation. Most of the 39 groups have completed functional education.* Seven new centres with 125 learners started functioning in 1980.

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* The curriculum comprises 60 lessons, each one on real life problems like diarrhoea,sanitation etc. The lessons are supported by explanatory charts.

The BRAC staff also gives emphasis to the involvement of women in more income-generating schemes. At the same time concerted efforts are being made to put these women in a better position socially. Due to staff constraints it is very difficult to expand the area of work. However, automatic expansion is taking place as the existing groups are influencing the adjacent village women to form groups and to take up social and economic actions in consultation with the existing group members and BRAC staff.

Group and Economic Activities

To date there are 39 groups with 760 members. In addition, more groups have formed themselves in the surrounding areas, but have yet to be given functional education or any income-generating activities. These groups, however, are also meeting and saving regularly.

The groups have their own group fund which is created from their savings and the profits of income-generating activities. With the group funds the members take up small-scale income-generating schemes like cultivation, small trading, goat rearing, oil crushing, weaving, rickshaw operating and paddy husking.

Jamalpur women group members are traditionally paddy rice huskers, so the majority of the loans are for paddy husking. These loans carry an interest at the rate of 12 per cent per annum and the repayment instalments are weekly. The women are required to pay the principal and interest in approximately 40-45 weeks. The instalments are paid from profits and a contribution of two Takas is also paid each week by every member to their group fund. Earnings are approximately Tk.40-45 per week. At the end of a scheme, the members can either invest an amount for buying assets or they can continue the programme on their own. This income also helps to add to their family income.

The BRAC staff help the groups to maintain records. They are also heavily engaged in organising and motivating the groups and at the same time advising the group members whenever and wherever necessary. The staff members visit the villages every day and they are in constant contact with the members. The loans are used strictly for the purposes for which they are taken. There has been no problem in repayment.

Weaving Centre

Originally there were two groups of 24 members at the Weaving Centre; today only one group with sixteen members is working there. This group has finished functional education and is highly motivated, but due to many technical problems still has to be subsidised by BRAC.

Sericulture

Different group members are given training in rearing of silkworms and spinning of yarn. The yarn is brought by the Sericulture Board. Recently, however, the women of the JWP have planted about 1000 mulberry trees near the town. When these trees mature, many more women could be employed in sericulture. About 16 women are engaged in rearing silkworms and in hand-spinning of silk. BRAC's sericulture centre also rears silkworms and distributes the cocoons to the women.

Kantha Embroidery

Seven groups in five villages are involved in traditional *kantha* embroidery of wall hangings and bed-covers. BRAC assists with working capital and marketing facilities through its own sales outlets.

Jute Goods

One group, which trained in the production of jute goods, is involved in small-scale manufacture financed by the group's own funds.

Poultry

In eight villages women have been trained in poultry vaccination and diseases. These women are now providing this service at a token charge to their group members and villagers. Some of them have been given loans from their group fund for small poultry farms in their homes.

Agriculture

Two groups have taken up cultivation of potatoes, wheat, onions, etc. from their own funds.

Savings and Bank Accounts

Group members contribute their savings regularly to their group funds. The groups are encouraged to open savings bank accounts for security as well as investment purposes. The accounts are in the name of the group, and withdrawals are authorised by the group. In the course of time these women will become familiar with normal banking systems and procedures.

Health and Family Planning

Preventive health measures and family planning are discussed in the functional education classes and also in the weekly group meetings. The government health services available locally are also discussed with the group members so that they can demand these services collectively. BRAC staff motivate the women to take family planning measures and the response is encouraging.

Social Actions

There are certain outcomes of JWP which, although not visible, are important.

- A group which agitated collectively last year to get medical services from the town hospital still receives special attention from the doctors.

- Many group members have bought assets like tin roofs, cows, goats, rickshaws and land from the income they have earned.

- Some groups are proposing to employ teachers paid from their own funds, appreciating the need for their children's education.

- Members from three groups went on a deputation to the Deputy Commissioner for an allocation of tubewells for their villages. Two tubewells have already been constructed and work on another is under way.

- In one village, one husband of a group member wanted to marry for the second time. The group took action, informing the family of his prospective bride that he was already married, in consequence of which the proposal was dropped.

- The groups, in general, try to solve their own social problems themselves without involving outsiders, so that there is less chance of exploitation from outside.

Conclusion

The women in Bangladesh are usually kept in the seclusion of their homes, in the belief that if they go out "their eyes will be opened". Thus, as the women are kept ignorant, they can be suppressed. The other instrument of exploitation is that the women are usually totally dependent economically on men.

The JWP's work has meant that women who were destitute are now socially more aware of themselves as persons. Participating in different types of income-generating programmes, they have gained experience in planning, financial management and operational efficiency, and are learning to take new responsibilities. In addition, these rural women today have realised the importance of being literate. By not only signing their names but also deciphering clearly what they are expected to sign, the women cannot any longer be exploited by the money lenders.

Furthermore, they have now come out of their veils and have some economic independence. Through interactions they are conscious of their rights. They are more vocal in their demands and hence have a social impact in Jamalpur - a fact which influences other women in the surrounding region.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR VILLAGE WOMEN IN BANGLADESH

Destitute and underprivileged rural women are rarely considered as an important target group for educational programmes. In Bangladesh, however, the Swanirvar Movement, with government support, has developed an original leadership training programme for village women.

Organised in the form of three-day workshops, the contents and methodology of the programme are based on the women's needs and Swanirvar's former field experience. Discussions range over the women's status and roles in village development; notions of family planning, health, nutrition, and child care; the organisation of income-generating activities; resource identification; ways to establish contact with service agencies; and project planning and implementation. In the 57 workshops organised to date, for the most part in rural areas, some 4966 participants have been trained for leadership. As a result, 1778 women's groups have been formed around income-generating activities, and 854 women's cooperatives have sprung up. The leadership training programme has in addition had a multiplier effect in many other areas, and is continuing to expand.

REACHING RURAL WOMEN, A NEW NATIONAL CONCERN

In Bangladesh, the female population constitutes 48.43 million of the total population of 80 million, over 90 per cent living in the rural areas. These Bangladeshi rural women form a nation within a nation. Deprived of their rights, forced into domestic drudgery, destined to early marriage, subjected to frequent child bearing, suffering from severe malnutrition and the victims of high mortality rates (38 per cent higher than the male death rate), their lives are a constant struggle for survival. The lack of job opportunities (out of a total civilian labour force of 25.18 million, only 6.4 million are women), their economic dependence on men, and their low literacy rate (13.7 per cent as against men's literacy rate of 29.9 per cent) have led them into a state of helplessness. Furthermore, women's contribution at home is not accounted for in the Gross Domestic Product. They have been considered economically unproductive and left outside the purview of the development process. Thus, until recently, the participation of women in development activities had been negligible.

However, towards the end of the country's first Five-Year Plan period, that is, by 1976-78, the Government initiated action to integrate women into the development process. Recent evidence of increasing women's participation suggests a positive policy shift.

INTEGRATION OF A SELF-RELIANCE MOVEMENT INTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In view of the socio-economic condition of women, the Swanirvar (SWR) Movement has launched a women's development programme in eleven thanas (the lowest administrative units), in line with the government policy for improving women's status. Initially a non-governmental organisation, the Swanirvar (self-reliance) Movement gained formal government recognition and support on 25 September 1975 as part of the aim to promote overall village development through the maximum use of local resources by village-based organisations.

In 1976, a large number of workshops were held all over Bangladesh to introduce a common format for village surveys, village planning, and programme implementation on a self-help basis by villagers, involving all the various sectors, such as farmers, landless workers, women, youth, and other groups. During this series of workshops, 399 men and 53 women were identified as the best workers, and later on became the trainers for the entire SWR Programme. In 1977, SWR activities were integrated into the work of the union councils (units composed of a number of villages), and thus emerged a new system of *Gram Sarkar* (village government) which has now been accepted as a national development strategy by the Government of Bangladesh. Thus this innovative programme has offered the nation a new insight, a new strategy, a new approach for mass mobilisation at the grass-roots level for the improvement of the quality of life. For this challenging task, the SWR Movement won several national awards in recognition of its outstanding people-oriented programme.

ORGANISATION OF COURSES TO PREPARE TRAINERS

The first institutional course in leadership and organisation and management skills was conducted in 1977 by Proshika, a non-governmental organisation involved in the organisation of group-based economic activities for the landless. At the request of the SWR Movement, a training course was organised at the Village Education Resource Centre (VERC) in Savar for the core team of 42 male and 30 female SWR workers, who were subdivided into smaller groups for training purposes. The contents of the training programme included:

- the identification of possibilities for the creation of organisations at different levels; organisational planning and management;
- the preparation and execution of a village survey;
- resource identification, mobilisation, and utilisation;
- project planning;
- leadership training;
- the role of trainers;
- documentation;
- training/evaluation.

Soon after this first leadership course at the VERC, a team consisting of five men and three women led a training programme for 78 workers at Jhopkhali Village of Betagi Thana from 13 December 1978 to 21 January 1979. Betagi thus became a field training site, serving to enlarge the core team of 88 men and 60 women trainers to meet the immediate need of the SWR training programme.

RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO TRAIN VILLAGE WOMEN FOR LEADERSHIP

Until this time, the landless and underprivileged rural women had never had the opportunity to be associated with an educational process, nor were they considered worthy of being exposed to a new learning process.

Launched at that very critical time when a political will began to crystallise in favour of women's advancement and their integration into the

development process, the SWR planners and workers felt the need for women to be involved also in mobilising the rural population. Many village women, even those who were illiterate, destitute, and landless, demonstrated leadership abilities.

SWR workers identified those women who were under comparatively less pressure from domestic responsibilities and who showed potential for assuming leadership roles. In 1978, with UNICEF assistance, leadership training for disadvantaged rural women was formally launched in eleven thanas in which the SWR Movement was intensively involved.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSES ORGANISED FOR RURAL WOMEN

These workshops were spread over the districts of Tangail, Rangpur, Jessore, Chittagong, Patuakhali, Bogra, Mymensingh, Faridpur, Basiral, Comilla and Noakhali. Their objectives were to:

- provide village women with the opportunity to acquire leadership techniques that they could then transmit to fellow villagers, both men and women;

- identify among the village leaders a core group which would receive advanced training in basic skills in agriculture and related fields;

- foster self-confidence in their ability to find solutions to their problems, with supportive services from government agencies and non-government agencies;

- increase their awareness of the improvement in their status which could be achieved through income-generating activities;

- broaden their vision by helping them to identify opportunities and resources, and ways of using them;

- encourage the establishment of basic services and promote community participation in the organisation of these services.

CONTENTS BASED ON LOCAL WOMEN'S NEEDS

Since the target group was landless women at the grass-roots level, the training course was built on the innovative practices developed out of field experience,without any impositions from a power base. It moved at its own rhythm, in harmony with the rural setting, based on the needs of local women. In other words, it was a programme planned from the bottom, and its contents were developed out of need and experience. Thus the areas covered were:

- explanation of the SWR concept;

- discussion of women's status and role in village development activities;

- adult literacy, notions of family planning/health/nutrition/child care;

- resource identification;

- group formation;

- income-generating activities, savings;

- project planning and implementation;

- ways to establish links with resource organisations and service agencies;

- leadership development;

- the role of SWR workers.

FIFTY-SEVEN WORKSHOPS FOR OVER 4000 WOMEN

From November 1978 to June 1980, 57 leadership training workshops for women were organised at different levels. Though the target group was underprivileged women, as a result of the fact that, in the villages, women like to be accompanied by a *sathi* (escort, preferably a man), about one-fifth of the participants were male. The following table indicates the breakdown by type of training and number of participants.

	No. of workshops	*Participants*
Thana level	42	3483
Division level	4	200
Bangladesh Agricultural University*	9	455
National level	2	828
	57	4966

* Advanced training in agricultural skills

EMPHASIS ON IMPARTING NEW CONCEPTS AND EXCHANGING EXPERIENCES

The duration of the workshops was limited to three days. The day started at 5 a.m. with an SWR awakening song and continued until midnight with a closing song composed by one of the workers. Working sessions consisted of both formal and non-formal training, including the narration of success stories, songs, drills, and field visits which opened up new horizons for the rural women, who had had little opportunity for relaxation and entertainment. (An invitation from a circle officer - the administrative head of the thana - to a three-day trip for a local group generated tremendous enthusiasm.) The morning working sessions were devoted to new concepts and information. Village visits in the afternoon broadened their comprehension of total village development and the evening meetings provided an informal atmosphere for an exchange of views, and the after-dinner sessions served as a time for taking stock of the day's work.

SOME EARLY RESULTS

Upon their return to their villages, the trainees organised individual or group projects according to the availability of resources for income-generating activities. Some have formed cooperatives in order to have

access to the credit facilities needed for a better implementation of their projects. They have worked as motivators of development activities and as change agents. In all, 1473 villages have been reached by the SWR programme.

Pooling of Resources for Income-generating Activities

Within these villages, after the first round of training, 1978 small groups were formed for the purpose of organising income-earning activities. The women pooled and invested their resources without any financial assistance from an external agency. As their activities generally brought them an income ranging from Tk.50 to Tk.250 per month, their status as economically productive members of the family was enhanced. The activities in which these village groups engaged are as follows:

Activities	*No. of groups*
Poultry raising	627
Vegetable cultivation	308
Cottage handicrafts	298
Goat or cattle raising	268
Dhaki (rice husking)	160
Pisciculture	117
	1778

Multiplier Effect in Training

Training programmes have also been organised for 410 women *ansars* (members of a government para-military defence force which also engages in social work) and 1520 women Village Defence Party members who in turn serve as the trainers of other women recruited from time to time. As under the new Gram Sarkar System women are represented in the village government; 622 of these women members have also been trained.

Access to Credit from Commercial Banks

Trained women leaders have succeeded in establishing a link with commercial banks which extend credit facilities to small landless groups without any collateral. At present, in all the thanas in which the SWR works, women have access to credit facilities through banks in the rural areas.

Creation of 854 Women's Cooperatives

As a result of the leadership training, 854 women's cooperatives have been formed. Cooperatives organised by other groups also benefit from the presence of women leaders trained by the SWR. The following table reflects the general impact of the SWR Movement on village development as at July 1980.

	No. of cooperatives	*No. of members*	*Savings in Tks.**
Agricultural cooperatives	815	25972	540496
Women's cooperatives	854	19949	247442
Youth cooperatives	814	18955	527371
Farmer/labour cooperatives	766	16950	136797
Other cooperatives	949	31724	2092795
	4198	113550	3544901

(*Taka: 15 Tk = approximately 1 US dollar)

Production of Training Materials

The establishment in May 1980 of a cell to develop training materials and carry out follow-up action added another dimension to the leadership training programme.

Links with Other Women's Development Agencies

A Women's Advisory Committee has also been set up with relevant government officials and non-government representatives in order to ensure coordination between the various women's development agencies. Communication between the SWR and other women's development agencies has thus been facilitated.

Establishment of a Research and Evaluation Cell

For the purpose of internal evaluation and action-oriented research, the SWR has established a Research and Evaluation Cell in its central office in Dhaka. The gathering of documentation on each activity is one of the prime responsibilities of the cell, as lack of data severely handicaps the formulation of future plans of action.

ORGANISATION AND FINANCING

Eight coordinators (four women and four men) under the supervision of the Chief Project Field Coordinator are responsible for the planning, implementation and supervision of field training. Sixteen assistant coordinators (50 per cent women) act as resource persons in their respective locations. Forty village women have been reoriented to serve as trainers.

The leadership training programme was financed by UNICEF and an amount of Tk.859,000, or US$ 57,333 has been spent for the purpose. The costs of SWR workshops are kept to a minimum. The workshops are organised in the rural areas. The trainees' travel to the site is paid by the SWR, and they are usually housed in primary schools or community centres.

EVALUATION: POSITIVE RESULTS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY PLANNING

The SWR Movement has received increasing support for training from Rural Development Academies, the National Institute of Public Administration,

Proshika, VERC, and relevant non-government organisations. An evaluation carried out by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies in the field of population control revealed that in some SWR villages, the natural growth rate has been brought down to 1 per cent as against a national average of 2.8 per cent. As a result, increasing support for SWR activities is being received from the Ministry of Population Control and Family Planning.

Another evaluation carried out by a composite team of various organisations such as the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, the Bangladesh Agricultural University, the National Institute of Public Administration, the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, and Proshika concluded that a solid base has been created for organised efforts towards self-reliance in the project thanas. People's organisations at various levels are effective tools for sustaining the momentum generated.

AN EXPANDING PROGRAMME

The task lying ahead for the SWR Movement is to undertake intensive education and support programmes at the village and union levels. These programmes require further leadership training. As a result, a programme of 42 more workshops in leadership skills for 4800 rural women and their *sathis* has been initiated with UNICEF assistance covering the period from October 1980 to June 1982. Through a multiplier effect, the rural population, and particularly the women and children of the 20 selected thanas, will receive direct and indirect benefits from this training programme. This represents a population of some 30,000 rural women, men and children.

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INTEGRATED PROGRAMME FOR RURAL LEADERS

INTRODUCTION

The Bangladesh National Women's Organisation known as Bangladesh Jatiya Mohila Sangstha, a voluntary organisation, was sponsored by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in 1976 with the object of ensuring the social, economic, educational and cultural welfare of the women of Bangladesh. It comprises experiments in working with the poorer sections of society.

Bangladesh Jatiya Mohila Sangstha today is the apex women's organisation of the country and is authorised by Bangladesh Government to federate various women's organisations. Its main objectives are:

- to inform women of their personal and socio-economic rights and privileges;
- to foster technical and vocational training for women and find job facilities for them;
- to formulate policies on women and children and adopt measures against discrimination, social and otherwise, for safeguarding women's rights;
- to encourage participation of women in cottage industry, cooperatives and marketing, sports and cultural activities;
- to safeguard women's rights as guaranteed by the Constitution and law;
- to popularise family planning and take steps to improve the standard of health, nutrition and child welfare and
- to assist and supervise the implementation of plans and programmes of the federating units.

In order to attain its objectives, the Sangstha has set up:

- 20 District Committees with offices in the district headquarters;
- 40 committees with offices in the sub-divisional headquarters;
- 350 committees with offices in police station headquarters. At an early date 44 more committees with offices are likely to be established.

The Sangstha has offices with paid staff in the Headquarters at Dhaka and in all the district and sub-divisional and police station (thana) headquarters in the country.

The programme of work of the above mentioned committees seeks to:

1. eradicate illiteracy among women;
2. set up libraries in every village;

3. popularise family planning methods and distribute contraceptives among the rural women;

4. promote the growth of international outlook and understanding in women;

5. organise conferences and seminars to encourage women to participate in the development of the country;

6. encourage women to observe cleanliness and general rules of hygiene;

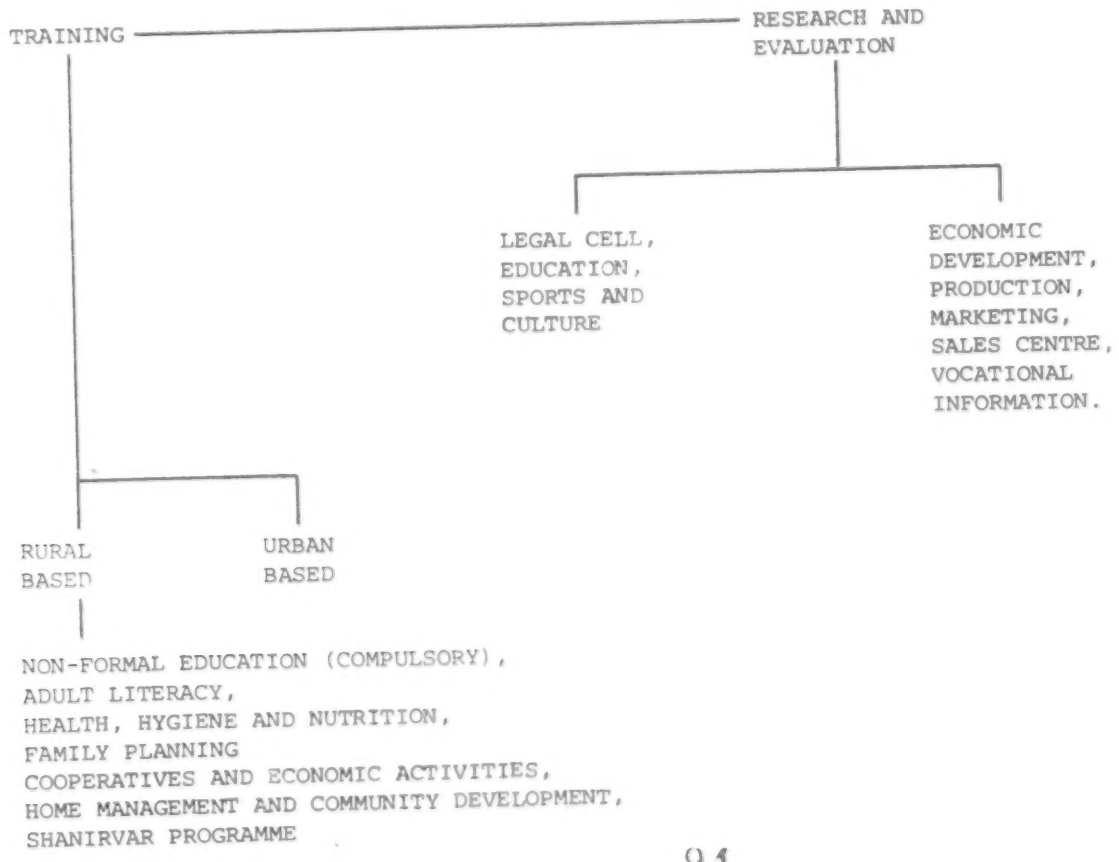
7. organise tree-planting weeks;

8. set up women's adult literacy centres in the villages;

9. encourage women to grow fruit and vegetables in kitchen gardens and market them on a cooperative basis; and

10. organise cottage industries in the rural areas.

The various committees soon realised that the success of their programme depended largely upon the workers at the village level. Recognising the need for motivated workers as well as trade instructors, it was found necessary to establish an Institute for Training. As a result, in 1977 the Bangladesh National Women's Development Academy was set up in Dhaka with the object of training village workers who would return and train groups of village women in various aspects of life. This Academy concerned itself with the following functions:



ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

Other than the normal clerical staff, the Academy is headed by a Director who is assisted by eight tutors, five specialists and fourteen trade instructors. All these paid employees are highly qualified.

The trainees are women from various districts who are selected by the Union Development Centres. After receiving six weeks' training the trainees return to the Union and Employment Centres and are employed by the Sangstha. Those amongst them who are better educated are appointed as Union Directors on a salary of 400 Takas a month (US $ 22.5). These Union Directors are in charge of 100 villages. Working with them are social workers who receive 200 Takas (US $ 11.2) per month, three trade instructors (one for the compulsory trade and two for optional trades) at 250 Takas per month (US $ 13.9), and voluntary social workers (three persons per village) at an honorarium of 50 Takas per month (US $ 2.6).

At the Union Development Centre there is also a Coordination Committee which is an advisory body and consists of

- President - a woman member of the Union Council,

- Secretary - a woman member of the Union Council, and

- ten village social workers.

Each Union Development Centre is also furnished and equipped to give training in three trade courses to the local village women. Prospective trade instructors are sent for training to the Training Academy in Dhaka. After completion of their training, they go back to their respective unions and are employed as trade teachers in the Union Development Centres where they train the village women. Training for the selected women is offered for different periods according to the nature of the trade. At present the following courses are offered:

handloom (compulsory)
sericulture
tailoring
poultry keeping
food preparation and preservation
cane and bamboo crafts
jute carpet making
knitting
batik and screen printing
hosiery
bakery and confectionery
light electrical repairs

While in training the women are provided with free board and lodging. To date approximately 430 women trade instructors and village social workers have completed their training and have subsequently been employed by the Sangstha.

Urban Academy

The National Women's Development Academy also has an urban section attached to it. In January 1977 the urban branch of the Academy started classes in cooking and confectionery, tailoring, flower making and arrangement, English conversation, knitting and motor driving.

The duration of the training courses is one and a half months to six months according to the nature of the courses.

An instructor is in charge of each course. The Urban Academy is self-sufficient as the fees collected from the students are adequate to meet the expenses. Hundreds of students have so far successfully completed the courses.

Funding Agencies

Jatiyo Mohila Sangstha receives its funds for the running of its sub-organisations from the Bangladesh Government. However, funds for specific purposes received from USAID and NORAD by the Ministry of Women's Affairs of the Bangladesh Government are channelled to the Sangstha.

CONSTRAINTS

The experience of the organisers as well as the workers reveals that the programme has not been as successful as was expected. Undoubtedly, the women at the grass-roots level have become aware of their social and economic rights. Nevertheless, on account of the backwardness of the rural areas, the main problem has been that of recruitment of trainees. In addition, despite the enthusiasm to work, the village women coming to the training centres fail to reach the expected level of competence.

Again, in respect of the trainees acting as motivators in their area of work, very often the Muslim women appear hesitant to come forward for either literacy or income-generating activity classes. For one thing, culturally conditioned to purdah, their men are unwilling to permit their participation in such activities as the village social worker's classes/meetings which are in the open, under a tree or in empty sheds. Secondly, the family members feel that time spent in training has little relationship to the amount of money earned and that in doing their traditional jobs the women are better contributors to the home economy.

At times, the Union Committees themselves, in several of the villages, are uncooperative. This, again, is possibly due to the fact that the members of the *Parishad* (Committee) are men who do not consider the programme to be meaningful for the women. On the other hand, in the case of the Hindu rural women (who do not observe purdah) in the villages of Silhi, Jessore and Bakulia, the village social workers have been able to implement their programmes fairly successfully.

Regardless of caste or village, a fairly strong feeling seems to have developed among workers at the middle and lower levels that they have no say in the policy-making or decision-making stage. The hierarchical structure of the organisation tends to create a gap at various levels, and fails to give the workers a feeling of the programme being their own.

EVALUATION

Recently an evaluation was conducted by NORAD in 14 out of 38 Union Development Centres. Primarily, the evaluators feel that more competent village-level workers are needed and have suggested better recruitment measures, improved training syllabus and procedures at the training centres.

CONCLUSION

The programme as it stands, perhaps, cannot be replicated. But there are valuable lessons which can be drawn from the experiences of the organisers. One is that no programme can succeed which does not consider the need to consult, motivate and involve the field worker so that she is personally committed to the programme.

In introducing training for income-generating activities a prior knowledge of the market demands is necessary to ensure the profitability of the training to the village women.

Further, the cardinal virtue of non-formal education is flexibility. Rigidity either in organisational structures or in the learning process militates against effective results.

POPULATION PLANNING THROUGH RURAL WOMENS' COOPERATIVES

INTRODUCTION

The Women's Pilot Project of the Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP) grew out of the recognition that national development was not possible without the involvement of women in the development process. Mobilisation of women in Bangladesh, however, has been a difficult matter, as several factors mitigate against such mobilisation in development programmes and planning.

The most important factor is the condition of women themselves. Most women live in the rural areas, and their lives are strongly influenced by the social patterns of purdah. Purdah restricts female participation in many of the public institutions of Bangladesh; it limits rural women's ability to socialise with other women, to visit the towns, do marketing, attend social functions and in general enjoy the mobility and freedom available to men. The consequence of social patterns restricted by purdah has created a situation whereby the rural women of Bangladesh have been isolated and illiterate, and lack opportunities for employment or schooling.

Furthermore, women's programmes have been considered secondary to the pressing need of programmes for national economic, social and political development. A mistaken assumption has been that women's role in these institutions is non-essential, secondary, or separate. Consequently, the bulk of planning and programmes have been for men. Little thought has been given to the integrated and interdependent nature of social development patterns in Bangladesh, especially the roles that rural women play in agricultural production. Noticeable is the fact that the family has seldom been considered as the basic unit of production, where each member plays a significant and important role. In fact, development programmes have tended to break up the family unit to fit the fragmented categories of development models.

The IRDP's women's programme is a significant departure from previous attempts to mobilise rural women. The programme is not an isolated one for women but is an integral part of the IRDP's approach to rural development. Based on the Comilla model, this programme seeks to establish rural cooperatives as a base for improved agricultural production and capital formation. The support to the existing cooperatives and further expansion of rural cooperatives has been given by linking governmental resources and services directly to the thana level.

This case study documents the growth and development of the Rural Women's Cooperatives, incorporating population planning as part of its goal. After giving a brief history of IRDP, the role of women's cooperatives in the overall national development has been outlined.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (IRDP)

Early in 1955, when former ICS officer Mr Akhtar Hameed Khan, Principal of Comilla College, evaluated the programme of village AID (a programme of Agricultural and Industrial Development), he recommended the need for trained

personnel to motivate the village people for active participation in any development programme. His recommendation was translated into action and the programme was wound up. In its place the Comilla Academy for Rural Development was set up in 1959. Selected men from villages were given training at the Academy, after which they went back to villages allotted to them.

Over a period of time, the trainees at the Academy felt certain snags in the training programme - the most important being that the visit of the trainees to the villages were at such infrequent intervals that the immediate problems of the villagers often remained unresolved. As such, they suggested a replica of the village development programme in Pakistan. The outcome was the experimental programme in Comilla Kotwali area which was started in 1960 whereby men's Cooperatives at village level were formed and the Thana Central Cooperatives Association was established, which became the seat for officers in different areas of work, e.g. poultry, agriculture, etc.

Although, in several ways, this experiment proved to be useful, it suffered from certain drawbacks, e.g. lack of institutionalisation at village level and an absence of coordination among various officers at the thana level. These shortcomings were rectified by the introduction of a two-tiered system whereby the Krishak Cooperative Societies (KCS) Cooperatives Association was affiliated to the Central Cooperative Association. This later led to the establishment of the Thana Training and Development Centre (TTDC) where female personnel were also trained for work in the villages.

For the first time, in this way, rural development strategies which directly included women in their implementation schemes began on a relatively small scale during the year 1960 under the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development (now called the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, BARD). Under this scheme a family planning programme was introduced. However, the women contacted raised issues other than population control, e.g. health, income-generating activities, etc. Furthermore, experience of workers revealed that women members of the village cooperative could not participate fully in the meetings because, owing to the constraints of the socialisation process, women lacked exposure and knowledge, and also they were reluctant to talk in the presence of men.

In spite of these problems, the relative success of the BARD approach was noticeable. For example, its positive effect on agricultural production, its usefulness for disseminating new techniques and knowledge at the village level, its capacity to encourage saving among people with relatively little means, and its interest in decentralising authority. This set the stage for a national rural development programme.

The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), using the two-tiered cooperative structure established by the Comilla strategy, was approved by the Parliament of East Pakistan in 1968, although the Liberation War and general unrest in the country delayed programme implementation until 1972/73. In 1975/76 a pilot project on population planning and rural women's cooperatives, i.e. a Women's Programme, was added to the overall programme. Following the basic structure used for developing male cooperative societies, the Women's Programme combined the development of female cooperative societies with the provision of appropriate training and credit facilities.

The Basic Programme

The basic programme can be briefly outlined as follows:

1. The project was for three and a half years and had a budget of Tk.167 Lakhs, coming from IDA credit including 75 Lakhs foreign exchange plus US $ 45,000 allotted under a Ford Foundation training grant.

2. The total size of the initial project was nineteen selected thanas in nineteen districts of Bangladesh. The programme was to be implemented in stages incorporating ten thanas in the first two years and nine additional thanas in the third year. Each thana would have approximately ten women's cooperatives in ten villages which would become the basis of the programme.

3.The programme would have two major parts - Rural Women's Cooperatives and population planning. Both aspects would be supervised and coordinated at IRDP headquarters by a Joint Director and her staff under the guidance of the Director-General, IRDP. Rural cooperatives for women would be organised at the village level and offer credit and training facilities, and technical knowledge in exchange for the general discipline involved in membership which included regular savings, purchases of shares, attendance at weekly meetings, and repayment of loans.

4. In each thana a female member of staff of one Deputy Project Officer (DPO) and two Inspectors would organise, supervise, and promote the development of the Women's Cooperatives and Population Planning in their thana. The female staff would be assisted by one male Inspector who would work on the male side of the programme in population planning. In addition, the female staff would be supported by other IRDP staff, the Project Director, Thana Project Officer, Deputy Project Officer and other thana-level officers.

RURAL WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

The Organisation and Growth of Cooperative Societies

The framework of the general IRDP Programme emphasised a two-tier cooperative system based in villages and linked to the thana level. This structure required organising and developing village-level institutions for women. Previously, no institutions existed through which rural women could be approached and women's activities could be developed. One of the first priorities of the IRDP's Women's Programme, therefore, was to establish viable organisations at the village level and link them with other governmental institutions. A basic hypotheses was that the increased earning capacity of women provided them with greater opportunities for supplementing family income, and at the same time gave them increased significance in family decision making, including family size.

It was with this in view that the Rural Women's Cooperative Societies were formed. Regular training was given to cooperative representatives, and services and resources and loans in kind were provided to facilitate putting training into practice. The training focused on the skills and abilities most village women already had, for example in poultry raising, livestock tending, kitchen gardening, rice processing, and handicrafts such as net making, weaving, and bamboo work. It emphasised the way in which traditional skills could be broadened into more commercial activities.

Today, training, resources, and services are channelled from the Thana Training and Development Centre and Thana Central Cooperative Association (TCCA), through the village cooperative societies, to rural women. The cooperative societies are an essential link in the process, as the development of new modes of social organisation are as important as pumping new resources and information into the rural areas. The isolation, illiteracy and restricted lives of most rural women had to be overcome, in addition to the provision of new resources. New alternatives had to be created in terms of patterns of interaction to new sources of income.

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Objectives of Women's Rural Cooperatives
The development of a model programme whereby village women can:

- acquire the training and services necessary to support increasing productive activity;

- learn about contraceptives and other family planning measures to free them from unwanted pregnancies;

- become literate so that they can learn about techniques, information, and general areas of knowledge of interest to them:, and

- develop and practise leadership skills as an avenue for bringing new knowledge to their villages and representing village interests to the government representatives at the thana level.

Training and institution-building were to be the key elements in the programme. Rural women's isolation meant little opportunity to develop leadership skills and experience in more formal business activities like savings, credit and production planning. The planning staff at all levels thus required continuous training as most women had little previous work experience and were unfamiliar with government rules, regulations and procedures. Training was therefore included in the programme in various ways and it provided new information and knowledge to be acquired by all people involved in the project. It also became an avenue for essential communication of problems and difficulties and a source of support and assistance in building and maintaining high commitment and morale.

Membership
Cooperative societies range in size from fifteen to forty-four members. The average society has twenty-nine members and in ten thanas society membership is below this average. Thana staff have been requested to encourage the recruitment of new members. At times, however, in a village divided into several *paras*, there is considerable distance between paras making it difficult for women in one to join a cooperative formed in another. This indeed has limited cooperative membership. Furthermore, because cooperative law limits cooperatives to one per village, this too has put constraints on cooperative membership.

Capital Formation of the Cooperatives
Capital formation represents a combination of total shares and savings of each member in each society and in each thana. Buying at least one ten-Taka share is a prerequisite for membership in the cooperative society. The number of shares a woman has, in addition to her savings, determines the size of the loan she can have. This is the basis for granting loans to rural women. The amount of capital per thana varies from Tk.2182 in the new programme thana to Tk.34,587 in the more established programme thanas.

The Loan Programme of the Cooperatives
The loan programme gives women access to relatively small amounts of capital with which they can attempt some income-producing activity. In order to qualify for a loan, a woman must be a member of a cooperative society. The society must have passed its probation period, registered under cooperative law and developed a joint production plan. The production plan is a composite of all the separate loans that individual members want. The Thana Female Inspector helps the women draw up a production plan, indicating which women want loans, for what amount, and for what activities. There must also be some indication of how the loan will be repaid.

The cooperative society decides who should receive loans and how much each loan should be. Everyone may be given the same amount, or the amount may vary by number of shares and total savings for each member or by length of membership. The plan is that submitted to the TCCA, where the Thana Project Officer and female DPO discuss and approve the plan. The society is then informed and plans are made to have the village women choose the method by which they will attempt some income-producing activity. This activity is then initiated with the purchase of an animal or arrangements for delivery of paddy, poultry, or bamboo. These items are then brought to a central place in the village on a certain day for distribution. On that day the DPO and Inspector come with the loan money. The exchange of Takas for goods is done in the presence of everyone. The village women sign a receipt for their loan in kind, as in this way the possibility of complaints is minimised.

The duration of the loan varies. In most thanas it is given on an annual basis; in other areas it is for six months only. A 5 per cent interest rate is charged for each loan. No additional service charges are included in the loan repayment.

A report (1) is available which indicates how and for what activities rural women are using loans. However, a few points can be summarised here.

1. As of 31 January 1977, a total of Tk. 195,575 had been issued as loans to 1,992 cooperative members in seven thanas. Not all thanas were giving loans as yet, owing to their newness in the programme or lack of registered societies.

2. An original allotment of Tk. 20,000 was made to each thana for loans. The demand for loans, however, far outstripped the amount available. Therefore a request was made and permission granted by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to make between Tk. 40,000 to 50,000 additional funds available to each thana for loans.

3. The demand for increased loans for women has grown rapidly. So far the repayment rate in the two thanas where loans were due is almost 100 per cent. In Gaffargaon Thana, 220 women received a total of Tk. 26,500, of which Tk. 24,300 has been repaid; the rest is not yet due. Daulatkhan Thana lent out Tk. 28,000 to twelve societies and all but Tk. 265 was repaid on time.

4. Women are quite ingenious at putting together funds from other sources to augment the loan money in financing some activity. The loans have been used for paddy processing, purchasing livestock, raising poultry, financing a small business or, in a few cases, purchasing supplies or materials or buying water to irrigate a rice crop.

5. Whether men were interested in using the women's money or not, women reported not giving their money over to men, but using it themselves. In many cases women said their husbands did not try to take the funds.

6. Profits from loans have ranged from Tk. 50 to Tk. 700. It is expected that the smaller figure will increase as this was profit reported after only two months' activity.

7. Further evaluation is planned to see how the loan programme progresses, and to investigate how increases in income can be encouraged.

The Women's Programme in Family Planning

This part of the pilot project has both a men's and a women's programme in family planning. The women's project works through the cooperative societies,

identifies women of child-bearing age, and encourages them to accept family planning. Among women cooperative members about 30 per cent have adopted family planning. More than half of the accepters are using the pill. This percentage has dropped because of complaints arising from the use of the Noreyl oral pill presently being supplied through the Population Planning Directorate.

EVALUATION

Continuous research and evaluation of the total programme is being done through specific surveys, case studies, and in-depth interviews in addition to monthly reports, special training assignments, and thana visits by the headquarters staff. Data gathering has provided helpful insights into various needs of rural women as well as keeping the headquarters staff up-to-date on programme development. On the basis of the studies, a number of changes have been made in the basic programme:

1. In the original project proposal, a number of issues had been overlooked which subsequently were corrected. One example was the accommodation for female staff at the thana level. Because women were being sent to work in their own thana, the problem of accommodation arose as the TTDC centres were sometimes isolated and far from towns. In addition, while belonging to a particular thana a woman may not have relatives or friends near the TTDC centre with whom she could live. Provision for office space and furniture for the women staff at the thana level also needed to be made. In many cases their work was hampered by lack of adequate office space and furniture.

2. More extensive and organised health care services were introduced for rural areas. It was found that there were women suffering from complications attributed to using contraceptives in every thana. In the Population Planning Programme, the substantial number of women who had complications led to greater funds being made available for follow-up health care for women who adopted family planning. For example, women who used coils were facing many difficulties. Indeed, many women may have been in poor health before adopting family planning; nonetheless, the continued growth of this programme depended on providing adequate follow-up health care.

3. Monthly conferences of the IRDP Project Directors were organised. This innovation in the general IRDP Programme proved of great benefit to the Women's Programme as it brought together the Dhaka officers with the senior field men. The discussions were useful for airing problems, making new policies and changing procedures wherever necessary.

CONCLUSION AND OBSERVATIONS

The training of the thana staff for the new programme thana is going on along with the other training programmes at the village and thana level, with the support and assistance of other IRDP officers and thana officers and staff. New dimensions have been added to the specialised training programme as represented by the BRAC adult literacy programme, and the nutrition programme organised in conjunction with UNICEF and the Nutrition Institute of the University of Dhaka.

Attendance at the TTDC training classes and in the village cooperative meetings is extremely encouraging. In both situations village women are quite regular in their attendance. Thus the main objective of creating new channels of communication within and to the village through the continuous training of local female cooperative members has been achieved.

Rural women are coming on their own, in the programme villages, to join the cooperative societies. Motivating village women is not the problem it once was.

There is a constant and ever-growing demand to extend the programme to other villages. In some of the project thanas rural women are forming co-operative societies on their own initiative and approaching the officials at the TTDC to include them in the Women's Programme. Headquarters is also receiving requests from other IRDP thanas for organising Women's Cooperative Societies in their areas. In fact, several TCCA's on their own initiative have organised women's activities in anticipation of being included in the IRDP's Women's Programme. In assessing the present status of the Women's Programme it is important to understand that the training and development of the staff at all levels has been a major preoccupation of the programme so far. The staff, while eager and talented, have not had previous working experience and their newness to the working situation requires time for training. In addition, the Women's Programme is attempting to forge new forms of social organisation for rural women, and this too has required tremendous amounts of time and energy, and the result of these efforts will only gradually be seen.

Tentative plans for expanding the Women's Programme include:

1. Twenty more villages in each of the present nineteen thanas included in the programme. This will result in a total of thirty villages in each thana, bringing the total number of villages in the programme to 570.

2. Thirty-one new thanas may gradually be included in the programme, bringing the total to 50 thanas and 1500 villages. Towards this end, six new thanas are being added to the programme each year.

The general phasing of the expansion is expected to be extended over the next five-year period. However, before this expansion is undertaken or even possible, the organisers have suggested that:

1. The headquarters staff should be increased in number.

2. Sufficient time should be allotted for staff development and training at all levels, including the preparation of requisite training materials.

3. An adequate office for the staff should be constructed at each TTDC.

4. Both preventive and curative health services and facilities for treating women and children near programme villages should be provided.

5. Small industries (fruit canning, fish drying, vegetable preservation, ceramics, poultry raising and breakfast cereal preparation) should be established in the project areas, and on-the-job training and employment of rural women should be encouraged.

6. Equipment such as hand pumps and threshers, along with training in their use and maintenance, should be introduced.

7. Training material for effective staff training should be developed in simple Bengali, which will ensure the uniformity of information among the thana- and village-level staff and prevent confusion among village people.

8. A mobile training team should be organised to conduct thana-level staff training. This training forum would generate a better understanding of each thana's activities and would help coordinate the interests of the field staff of the various Ministries involved in the programme.

9. Further in-depth evaluation of the programme should be done to assess programme strengths and weaknesses with the aim of increasing programme effectiveness.

Note

1. *Report on the Use of Loans by Female Cooperative Members*, by Dr Florence E. McCarthy.

Case Studies from Sri Lanka

INTRODUCTION

Two of the three Sri Lanka studies exemplify what is being done to help urban women help themselves. The work in Henamulla Camp aims at the uplift of women in the shanties around Colombo where the living conditions are as poor as any in rural areas. The Kirillapone Project is focused on all members of slum families in areas due for slum clearance. The other study, in contrast, describes training in rural leadership for women.

The Kaduwela Training Centre trains women who have been selected by their villages to learn skills in crafts, nutrition and health care which they are then expected to utilise in upgrading village life. They then train other groups of village women so that the scheme has a multiplier effect built in. This contrasts with many of the other case studies in this handbook where there is no formal mechanism for enabling one group of women to pass on newly acquired skills to the next.

The Henamulla Camp Scheme is notable for its multi-sectoral organisation. A number of government and voluntary agencies are involved in attempts to improve the quality of life for shanty town inhabitants in general. The Women's Bureau arose out of the felt needs of women for income-generating skills and has diversified into health education and training in management.

The Kirillapone Project, assisted by the US Save the Children Organisation, concentrates on helping women's groups who have got themselves formally represented on the community committees. As well as efforts in health and income generation, the scheme has pioneered attempts to support children who enrol in schools by the provision of food and school books.

TRAINING IN RURAL LEADERSHIP, KADUWELA

INTRODUCTION

The Kaduwela Training Centre case history presents a model of an integrated training programme imparted to village women who have been selected by inhabitants of different villages. The Lanka Mahila Samiti, a voluntary organisation in Sri Lanka, provides the training, after which the trainees return to their villages and involve themselves in upgrading village life and training groups of village women.

The case history has been chosen especially with a view to its relevance to developing agrarian countries where it is difficult to reach far-off villages. The "snowball" technique adopted in a training programme of this kind has a further value as the trained workers, coming from the village itself, are readily accepted by the villagers.

Although the Lanka Mahila Samiti runs several rural training centres, the Kaduwela Training Centre has become a model centre with training programmes covering the theory and practice of various skills.

Labour Force in Sri Lanka

The population of Sri Lanka as reported in the 1971 census was about 14 million, with the female population comprising 48.5 per cent. The bulk of the population (80.9 per cent) was to be found in the rural areas. The labour force totalled approximately 4.5 million.* Over the years, the number of women employed has increased.

Employment in Rural Areas

Women in rural areas who have had access to secondary and university education tend to seek employment in offices, industries and activities which have an element of modernity. It is generally the older women or women with little education who remain in the village or plantation performing the traditional agricultural tasks.

Despite the various other advantages accruing from free education and industrial development, unemployment among women in the rural sector continues to be high (30 per cent), and highest among those in the age group 17-34 years.

The role of women in peasant agriculture differs according to geographical area, type of cultivation, and extent of land owned. By and large, they work on the traditional jobs of weeding, transplanting and harvesting paddy rice. During the lean periods, women engage in cottage industries, e.g. lace making, weaving, basket making, coir making, pottery and beedi-wrapping.

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*In determining the labour force, housewives occupied only with domestic duties have been included.

Those in the plantation sector are exclusively casual labourers, predominantly on tea and rubber estates. Employed on a daily basis, they do not have a regular income and have no economic security. The only fringe social benefit these women enjoy is provision of creches for their children.

Prior to 1930, nothing much was done to improve the living conditions of women in the rural areas. Since then, even though programmes and policies of the Government have resulted in a steep rise in their life expectancy and literacy levels, their living conditions have continued to be much the same. Even today, this section of the population lacks its due attention. It still constitutes the deprived section of the community, having no assured employment, receiving low wages and not having the social benefits enjoyed by the urban areas. Since large sections of this population are widely scattered, they miss the impact of most government development programmes. It is here that non-governmental organisations can assist by direct contact with these people.

THE LANKA MAHILA SAMITI

In Sri Lanka, or Ceylon as it was then called, the years 1928-31 witnessed discussions and debates on women's rights to the franchise, the legal status of women, and equal rights to election to the legislature. Out of these discussions there evolved the creation of "Women's Institutes" in the rural areas whose objective was to bring about the emancipation of rural women. As a result, the Lanka Mahila Samiti was established in 1930, and the first *samitiya* or "association" was formed in 1931 at a village at Pannipitiva. It is a national organisation - the first non-governmental organisation to enter the area of rural development. Although leadership at the national level, even today, is provided by urban, western-educated, elitist women, there is wider representation at the district and village levels. Groups of women coming from all walks of life meet in villages at monthly intervals to exchange ideas and discuss subjects of interest. Such discussions provide a very useful means whereby women can gain confidence and experience. The forum also discusses and organises village development schemes such as the building of roads and wells, *shramadana* or the donation of free labour.

By the end of 1980 there were approximately 2476 registered Branch Samitis spread throughout the eighteen districts in the country, of which about half are presently active. The membership is approximately 200,000. Each year an average of 20 new Samitis are registered with the parent organisation. The request for the organisation of a village Samiti is made by a signed application of at least ten women of that village. The parent organisation then sends its trained personnel to explain its objectives and organise the village Samiti. Once the mutual goals are agreed upon, the village Samiti is organised. It is generally confined to women in the age group 15-50 years, with a predominance of young married and unmarried persons in the age group 15-25 years. This group of women then prepares a programme of work covering as many items as possible.

Once the village Samiti has been organised, a request is made to the parent organisation, signed by at least 20 members of the Samiti, for a nominee of theirs to undergo a course of training at the Training Institute. This training generally lasts for three and a half months, after which the trainee goes back to her village to function as a *Sweacha Sevika* (voluntary worker). Details of the training will be described later.

On her return to the village, the Sweacha Sevika organises training programmes for village workers (Grama Sevikas) in rural development work. Besides training the Sweacha Sevikas from different villages, the Lanka Mahila Samiti

undertakes the establishment and running of nursery schools, the provision of instruction in family planning (funded by UNFPA), the establishment of production centres (46 at present functioning) specialising in handicrafts with local raw materials, the organisation of soup kitchens for undernourished children, and basic training in cottage industries and agriculture for low-income mothers. These activities are achieved through its trained Sevika who is a member of the Mahila Samitis in the village and seeks the parent organisation's assistance from time to time.

At the village level, the Samiti functions on democratic lines with office bearers elected annually. It plans and implements a programme of education, training and village development under the guidance of the trained Sevikas (paid workers) and trained Sweacha Sevikas. The village Samiti meets regularly for discussion of its activities, problems etc. and records of the proceedings are maintained. The field staff of government departments - such as Health, Agriculture, Education, Rural Development, and Small Industries - are invited to participate at its meetings in order to make the village women aware of activities which could be organised to benefit them and the village as a whole. This contact at regular intervals between village women on the one hand, and the trained workers of the Lanka Mahila Samiti and the government officials on the other, serves as a means of informal education and training for village women in order to make them better and more efficient mothers and housewives, and thereby obtain a balanced development of the family and the village. These programmes also help young persons to secure gainful employment.

As a consequence of the awareness of the need for change through the new knowledge and guidance provided by these contacts, women in several villages have organised a wide range of activities for their own betterment.

The Lanka Mahila Samiti maintains 24 training centres throughout the island at present. At each of these centres various activities are organised - needlework and sewing, agriculture, and food preservation and canning. A creche is provided for the children of the trainees. Approximately 120 village women are trained each year in three batches. Their knowledge is widened in the sphere of family health, agricultural production, food preparation and preservation, cottage industries and community development and leadership. By the end of 1980 over 3000 females of the age group 18-30 had completed the general course. Once these trainees return to the village they are expected in turn to train village workers.

Funding

Besides receiving a grant of Rs.50,000* a year from the Ministry of Rural Development, and Rs.15,000 from the Department of Health Services, the Sri Lanka Samiti receives funds from such external aid agencies as DANIDA, World Vission International, Family Planning International Assistance, Asia Fund for Human Development, Ve'st Agder Krnets and Finland Svenska. In addition, the interest accumulating from three Memorial Scholarships is used to help needy trainees to train at Kaduwela. With the opening of a sales centre in Colombo, sales of items made by the girls at the Training Centre provide an income of over a hundred thousand rupees per year. The interest in the profits from the sales centre is also used for the work of the Samiti.

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* Sri Lanka currency

KADUWELA TRAINING CENTRE

Established in 1948 in a small room given by the villagers of Kaduwela, this is now a fully fledged training centre on a ten-acre site with a large hall, a lecture room, two dormitories with 35 beds, kitchen, pantry, stafr living quarters and simple guest accommodation, a creche, a nursery and spacious grounds for home gardening. It forms a major link between the Samiti and the people, since thousands of field workers, nursery school teachers and village leaders, after receiving training under the supervision and guidance of the Kaduwela Committee, go back to the rural areas.

The work at the Training Centre is supervised by a Committee at the national level. This Committee comprises a Chairman and members of the Executive (of whom one is the Executive Secretary). All are honorary workers. Although residents of Colombo, where the parent organisation is located, the members and the Chairman make frequent visits to the Centre and attend the village meetings organised by the Training Centre.

The nominees for training usually have GCE O-level qualifications. In more remote parts of the country, where educational levels are lower, several 5th-graders are also accepted for training. All the nominees, however, need to be unmarried and in the age bracket 18-30 years.

Training Programme

At the training centre, there is a resident warden and four women handicraft instructors and junior staff. With assistance from outside experts, the personnel employed by the organisation as well as the nominees of village Samitis are trained. On an average, 30-35 persons are accommodated at each course, so that annually approximately 120 women become trained village workers.

During the first three months, theoretical and practical aspects are dealt with in respect of agriculture, handicrafts, embroidery and tailoring. The theoretical part of the programme includes lectures by government officials on health, nutrition, environmental health, mother care and child health, family health and population, agriculture and the cooperative movement. Practical experience of working in health clinics is also provided as the public health nurses assist the girls under training when they visit the houses in the village.

Practical training aims at developing vocational skills in the production of household requirements such as ekel brooms, coir brooms, winnowing fans, coconut milk strainers, lace, bags, mats, tea cosies, etc. The specimen articles made by the trainees are taken back to illustrate the type of articles which Samiti members in the village can produce themselves for their use. There is systematic training in development of home gardens through practical cultivation of cash crops by the trainees on the land within the premises of the Training Centre. In addition, training in public speaking forms an import-and part of the programme.

During the last two weeks, the trainees practice role-play on organising a village Samiti, conducting Samiti meetings, programming etc.

Generally the core course comprises basic training by means of classroom instruction as well as practical work in the following main areas:

1. *Health* - application of health rules including sanitation, nutrition, maternity and child care, first aid, and simple home remedies.

2. *Home Management* - simple cookery: food preservation including bottling of fruit and cordial making, house cleaning, washing and ironing, budgeting, thrift and savings.

3. *Rural Development* - participation in schemes of the Rural Development Department, rural development societies, cooperative societies, community projects and rural projects at the village level.

4. *Agriculture* - land clearing and soil preparation, plant food, manure and the making of compost, the growing of ginger, turmeric, chillies, onions, tomatoes and other vegetables in home gardens, cultivation of coffee and pepper, and paddy cultivation.

5. *Education* - implementation of education schemes, e.g. nursery, and providing general education in citizenship responsibility and oratory.

6. *Handicrafts* - sewing and embroidery, lace making, the conversion of raw materials found plentifully in the village such as *wetakeiya* or screwpime. *henna* or hemp, *pung* or reeds.

Needlework being a compulsory subject, which is followed by all the trainees, affords the opportunity to learn crochet, lace making and pillow lace making. Besides, soft toy making, flower making, hair styling and the making of rugs and brooms (ekel brooms) and coir ropes are also a part of the handicraft training programme.

At times special emphasis is given to one of the core subjects, e.g. handicrafts or agriculture, by holding exhibitions or contests. When in the 1979-80 period a new cattle shed was built at a cost of Rs.28,232 (through DANIDA assistance) the poultry yard at the Training Centre was expanded. The eggs from the poultry yard today are purchased by the Centre and also sold in the market. The trainees are given every opportunity to participate in budgeting and home management, and are sent to view the model homes. The officials from the Farm Women's Agricultural Extension Project, Paradeniva, at times conduct lectures on food and nutrition as well as giving cookery demonstrations, using rice substitutes such as soya beans and manioc. The washing and starching of clothes is also included in the syllabus. The training course concludes with an educational tour of the village.

The cultural side is developed with simple drama, folk dancing and drumming on the traditional *rabana*. Government officials supplement the resident staff in giving lectures and demonstrations in their own subjects. The training is based on the Mahila Samiti ideals of self help, citizenship responsibility and the joy of service, and brings out the latent capacity for leadership. At the end of the course trainees sit tests in all subjects and records are maintained of the results. Certificates are awarded at the end of term where, at the "Lamp Lighting Ceremony", each trainee pledges to carry the light of knowledge to her village to dispel the darkness of poverty and ignorance. Thus the training given at this Centre has continuous and far-reaching results in raising social, economic and health standards in villages throughout the country.

In addition to these voluntary workers or Sweacha Sevikas, the Movement depends largely on the services of paid field workers who are selected from voluntary workers who have been given advanced training at the Centre. Grama Sevikas, or paid village workers, are resident in a village for three months at a time during which they carry out a full programme of work. They rise eventually to the grade of *Parikshena Sevikaa* or supervisory workers who assist in the work of branch Samitis in an entire district. "Creche Sevikas"

are given special nursery school training and appointed to work in the creches (numbering nearly eighty) maintained by the Association. All categories of workers are given brief refresher courses at the Centre, depending upon availability of accommodation and funds.

From time to time, the training course has been modified to suit the needs of the trainees, for example, in the period 1979-80 only two courses of five and a half months each were conducted. During this period 47 Sweacha Sevikas from eight districts were trained. Again, six Grama Sevikas followed a one and a half months refresher course; two trainees followed a one month refresher course in needlework, while six trainees from the Department of Agriculture followed a three week course in handicraft making. The first course for the year was a specialised course in handicrafts and the second one was a specialised course in Agriculture.

Other Activities

Creche

The creche at the Training Centre is under the charge of a Sevika - a paid employee of the organisation. She also has a voluntary assistant to prepare the midday meal. The furniture and toys are made out of local raw materials such as rubber seeds and coconut shells, waste cloth, reels, etc.

The infants stay in the creche from 8 a.m. to about 2 p.m., and are provided with biscuits and milk at about 10 a.m. and a midday meal. After lunch they sleep for a few hours or until their mothers fetch them.

The Department of Social Services pays a grant of Rs. 10 per infant (0-6 years) per month to provide for the meals of the infants. The average daily attendance at a creche is about 30 infants.

Nursery School

With the aid of the Department of Probation and Child Care the Kaduwela Centre runs a nursery school for 40 children of working mothers. Health, sanitation, nutrition and sports are some of the services provided.

The children who stay at the nursery school for periods of one to five years are trained to be methodical and taught good habits. All facilities are provided for their mental and creative development. The nursery school provides the trainees with practical training in child education services and administration of nursery schools.

Besides the participation of trainees in the creche and nursery schools, at times the trainees are sent to participate in social programmes, e.g. participation in the Shrimadana Campaign organised by the Awissawella Probation Unit for the cleaning of the Awissawella hospital. They give a helping hand in the Family and Child Welfare Centre. They also organise programmes on nutrition for mothers, e.g. helping in distribution of milk powder at Thriposa.

On return to their villages after training, the Sweacha Sevikas translate the skills they have acquired into activities benefiting the women of the village. Because the trainees belong to the village and have been nominated for training by the representatives of the village itself, they have little or no difficulty in establishing a rapport with the village women. Any changes or innovations suggested by them are not looked upon with suspicion - in fact the villagers feel happy that modern ideas and technology are brought to their doors without their having to move out of their homes.

EVALUATION

Although no specific evaluation (internal or external) of the Kaduwela Training Centre has been conducted, in 1969 an evaluation of 125 villages where Samitis were functioning was undertaken by Ms Natsuya Tamamote, FAO Consultant. The findings of the survey provided pointers to the improvement of training at the Kaduwela Training Centre.

Several issues were highlighted by the survey in respect of the needs and problems of the rural families. It was found that the food intake of the majority of rural families was not adequate in respect of protective and body-building foods. This was mainly due to the amount of expenditure incurred on food (40 per cent of families spending less than Rs. 1 per person per day).

As a consequence, it was suggested that trainees at the Kaduwela Centre should be provided with an improved syllabus in nutrition as well as being given a more practical training, e.g. teaching them how to achieve a balanced diet with wise selection of foods at minimum cost. Another suggestion by the consultants was that

> "..considering most women in rural areas were spending their maximum time and energy in the kitchen under conditions which were unhygienic and tiring, it would be desirable to introduce a subject like (a) proper kitchen maintenance and, (b) study of the various types of kitchen plans to suit the needs and financial allowance of individual families."

The survey also found that the rural women even today lacked the desired health habits. The Sevikas had not been successful in adequately motivating them. Motivation for change therefore needed to be emphasised during the training programme.

Because more than 50 per cent of village women were involved in more than one kind of handicraft which they were unable to sell, it was suggested that training should not be in too many types of handicraft production (as at present) but in a few crafts that had a ready market, and the emphasis should be on quality rather than variety or quantity. Teaching of crafts at the Centre also needed improvement.

Most rural women had mentioned money (lack of it) to be their major problem, and yet only a few maintained household accounts. This should be one thing for which training should be provided. Considering the large average family size amongst villagers, training in family planning was essential.

Improvements in Programming and Teaching

The study of the teaching programme revealed that the subject teaching had not been properly phased. It was suggested that the modern methodology of programme phasing be developed, which would not only make the existing teaching effective but also enable the organisers to expand the syllabus.

Subsequent to the evaluation report, several aspects of the training programme have been modified.

Impact of the Programme

Observation of certain villages where the Sevikas from the Kaduwela Training Centre had returned after a three and a half month course reveals that the community at large seems to have benefited largely in the sphere of social

uplift and a consciousness for a better quality of life. However, there still appears to be a crying need for income-generating activities for women. The home gardens programme failed to achieve its objective while the handicrafts produced are not of marketable quality. Although the parent organisation, the Lanka Mahila Samiti, helps in several ways to replenish the dwindling raw material, yet adequate raw material fails to reach the rural women. Besides, there is no organised marketing infrastructure to lead to a continuous flow and sale of products produced.

Other major constraints to higher quantitative and qualitative productivity appear to be the poor financial resources of the craft workers, arising from their very low levels of income and lack of credit facilities and poor management skills.

One way in which rural women can ensure a better price for their products is by forming themselves into cooperatives, or other associations with bargaining power. Since it is unlikely that, left to themselves, they will be able to do this, the intervention of the Mahila Samiti may be necessary in the first instance.

Even with improved incomes, the craftworkers will need capital for tools and raw materials. A programme which could assist the handicraft worker to obtain credit is the organising of cooperative credit unions among the producers of handicrafts. These unions will enable the producers to obtain credit, raw materials, and technological and marketing advice.

The management skills of the craftworker should also be upgraded to cope with the new situation. For instance, in costing an article the village craftworker does not take adequately into account labour expended on the article. Thus an entrepreneur needs to have a knowledge of costing and simple accounts. This should be part of the Sevika's training, so that she could act as a resource person for small entrepreneurs.

CONCLUSION AND OBSERVATIONS

The training of village leaders from within the village community is undoubtedly an extremely useful method of reaching out to the women at the grass-root levels. Of special importance is this approach in a developing, predominantly rural country where distance and expense make it difficult for any organisation to conduct an integrated programme of development.

Considering the level of education (both of the trainee and the village women) as well as the short duration of the course, it is not possible for a training centre to provide a very high level of training in all aspects. It would therefore be highly desirable to extend the course and concentrate on training in a specialised sphere, and also to enlist more actively the cooperation of government and non-governmental agencies operating at the village level for the welfare of the community.

Understandably, financial constraints prevent the expansion of the existing centre or the opening of a new training centre. Efforts need to be made to obtain financial assistance. The sales centre should also be developed; at present the quality of goods displayed scarcely competes with goods in the market, or for that matter with the quality expected of export products.

The Sevikas trained at the Kaduwela Centre should be given the necessary assistance to set up a "model home" in the village itself.

Analysis and Summary of the Study on 125 Samitis

Demographic Data

Age-group of those who responded

Age below 30 years	-	72 per cent
Age between 30-60 years	-	24 per cent
Age above 60 years	-	4 per cent

Family Members per Family Unit (Villages)

Up to 5 members' families	-	31 per cent
Between 6-10 members' families	-	56 per cent
Between 11-14 members' families	-	13 per cent
Average number of members per family	-	7

Pattern of Food Consumption in the Families

(a) *Frequency of meals per day*

Thrice	-	12 per cent
Twice	-	74 per cent
Once	-	7 per cent
Not at all / no responses	-	7 per cent

(b) *Vegetable intake*

2 kinds every day	-	46 per cent
3 kinds every day	-	34 per cent
4 kinds every day	-	10 per cent
Seldom/no response	-	10 per cent

(c) *Fruit intake*

One or more every day	-	11 per cent
Two or three a week	-	41 per cent
One or less a week	-	11 per cent
Seldom	-	29 per cent

(d) *Fish intake (dried/fresh)*

Three times a day	-	28 per cent
Twice a day	-	30 per cent
Once a day	-	21 per cent
Seldom/never	-	20 per cent

(e) *Meat intake*

Once a day	-	1 per cent
2-3 times a week	-	10 per cent
1-2 times a fortnight	-	11 per cent
Seldom/never	-	68 per cent

Money spent on food per person per day

20-50 cents	-	10 per cent
50 cents to Rs.1.00	-	30 per cent
Rs.1/- to Rs.1/50	-	34 per cent
Between Rs.1/50 to Rs.3/50	-	26 per cent

Whereas most families consume rice, vegetables and coconuts grown on their lands, fruit, eggs and milk which have to be purchased are not a frequent item of consumption.

Type of kitchen utensils used/possessed by families

All clay pots	-	50 per cent
All saucepans	-	3 per cent
More clay pots and few saucepans	-	34 per cent
No response	-	34 per cent

(The majority of families cook in clay pots on open fires on the ground).

Health and Sanitation

Drinking water supply

From a deep well in own/another's garden	-	54 per cent
From a shallow well in own/ another's garden	-	8 per cent
From a river, spout, lap	-	5 per cent
No response	-	33 per cent

Type of latrines used

Pit latrines	-	51 per cent
Water-sealed latrines	-	29 per cent
No response	-	20 per cent

House Plans for Families

The house plans of the families are quite varied - 39 types. Mainly the large families live in one or at most two bedrooms, a verandah, a living/ diningroom and a kitchen/store. Small families generally live in better houses with two or three bedrooms, a verandah, a livingroom, a kitchen, and a separate store.

Work Done by Women (Besides Housekeeping and Care of Children)

(a) *Agriculture*

Every day - half or more of day	-	10 per cent
Every day - a few hours only	-	28 per cent
About 2-3 hours a week	-	26 per cent
Seasonal	-	24 per cent
None	-	12 per cent

(b) *Handicrafts*

Embroidery	-	26 per cent
henna, wetakeiya	-	30 per cent
Cloth weaving	-	11 per cent
Lace making	-	40 per cent
Needlework	-	59 per cent (Besides embroidery)

(More than half of the women do more than one handicraft)

Utilisation of Handicraft Produced

For home use only	-	32 per cent
For home use and sale	-	34 per cent
Mostly for sale	-	5 per cent
No response	-	31 per cent

The quality of the handicraft produced is important if it is for sale; possibly that is why most of it is used at home.

Difficulties Faced by the Families

(a) Insufficient income

(b) Unemployment

(c) No development in agriculture

(d) No land

(e) Poor housing

(f) Difficulty of communication and transport

(g) Ill-health.

IMPROVING LIFE IN SHANTIES/SLUMS - HENAMULLA

The present study concerns itself with the life of women in the slum area of the metropolitan city of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

AN OVERVIEW OF SLUMS/SHANTIES*, COLOMBO

The administrative district of Colombo contains nearly half of the total urban population in the country. This population is concentrated in the centre and in the suburban areas within a radius of fifteen miles within the Colombo Metropolitan area.

The nature of the problems in the Metropolitan area of Colombo is typical of any post-colonial city. As the centre of distribution of exports and imports and as the hub of administration from colonial times, Colombo has grown to be the single dominant metropolis in the country. Colombo has grown in importance because it is a port around which the country's import and export activities are centred.

The growth of slums and shanties in the city have today assumed alarming proportions, as in many cities of the developing world. The following table indicates the large share occupied by slum and shanty dwellers.

TABLE 1

Dwelling Units

	No. of units	*No. of families*	*Average no. of families per unit*	*No. of people per unit*	*Average family size*
Slums	17,253	23,137	1.34	8.04	6
Shanties	15,951	19,608	1.23	7.37	6
Total slums/ shanties	33,204	42,745	1.28	7.72	6

Source: UDA (Urban Development Authority) Policy Paper

**Slums:* Old tenements or large old residences in the commercial industrial areas of the city, which have deteriorated due to neglect, overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions.

Shanties: Structures of non-durable materials, like wooden planks, zinc sheets or cadjans, built mainly by squatters on private, government or municipal land, often subject to inundation by floods.

Population

Total in the city	*Pre-school population under 5 years Total (approx.)*	%	*Population in slums*	*Population in shanties*	*Total*	%
613,018	52,000	8.5	138,822	117,648	256,470	41.5

Source: 1978 mid-year estimates and UDA Policy Paper

It is to be noted that slum/shanty dwellers form approximately 42 per cent of the population in the city. The growth of the shanty units and the population has been extremely rapid - from 1347 shanties in 1953 to 33,204 in 1979. Other than the normal problems of overpopulation in a city, the inhuman living conditions among the slum dwellers became a source of great concern to the government as well as to non-government social organisations.

In June 1979 a Project Committee representing the Women's Bureau, the Ministry of Local Government, Colombo Municipal Council, the Common Amenities Board, the Urban Development Authority (UDA), the Sri Lanka Women's Conference, the Department of Small Industries, the Public Assistance Department and UNICEF selected four slum areas for initiating slum improvement work.

TABLE 2

Project Areas Selected

Areas	*Housing units*	*Number of families*	*Total population (approx.)*	*Ethnic/religious composition*	
Henamulla	590	655	3630	Sinhalese/Buddhist	45%
				Moor and Malay/ Muslim	42%
				Tamil/Hindu	13%
Aluthkade	286	480	2900	Muslim majority	
Baseline Avenue, Borella	146	197	1200	Sinhalese/Buddhist majority	
Wellawatte Canal Bank	57	63	380	No exact data available	

On an experimental basis the first Project activities were started at Henamulla.

HENAMULLA

Henamulla Camp is one of the most congested and crowded shanty settlements in the north of the city. In an area of ten acres there are 655 family units with 3630 people living in 590 shanties made with wooden planks, cadjan and corrugated sheets. A few houses are made of wattle and daub with mud floors. The people live in an environment of squalor, hunger and hopelessness under conditions of deprivation and poverty.

The first settlers in the Henamulla Camp came in August 1948. That year the low-lying areas around Grandpase, Maligawatte and Sedawatte were flooded owing to heavy rains and the overflowing of the banks of the Kelani River. Following an epidemic of smallpox the families were immediately evacuated by the Colombo Municipality and were temporarily housed in the two camp buildings at Henamulla abandoned by the British military authorities. By mid-1950 other families from flood affected areas, and those evicted by the Colombo Municipal Corporation (CMC) under the slum and shanty clearance programme in the city, had come to reside in this camp area.

In order to get a better view of the conditions prevailing in Henamulla at the preparatory stage of the programme, a social-economic survey was conducted both by the UDA and the Women's Bureau assisted by UNICEF - the latter conducted by the women of the locality itself.

The community surveys conducted highlighted several issues, particularly the need to:

1. create community awareness among the people and thereby bring about community cohesiveness among various racial and religious groups;

2. involve the dwellers in the process of community self-development, giving due consideration to the people's hopes and aspirations;

3. develop community leadership so as to ensure the participation of the people in planning, implementation and continuity of various community development programmes and activities;

4. develop income-generating skills amongst women in order to improve family life.

Immediate attention therefore had to be focused on the improvement of:

1. environment - including housing and sanitation;
2. employment and economic uplift;
3. education - general and vocational;
4. health and family life;
5. recreation and welfare.

Environment, including Housing and Sanitation

The majority of the dwellers felt insecure as they had no tenure or ownership of the land where they had already built their houses. As a result they had no inclination to improve the condition of existing houses, sanitation, water and drainage facilities, street lighting, speedy disposal of refuse, etc. Immediate steps were needed to provide security which would motivate them to improve the prevailing conditions.

Employment and Economic Uplift

More than a quarter of the dwellers had no regular income and one fifth had practically no income at all. The average household income was approximately

Rs. 140 per month. The women had no marketable skills whereby they could significantly contribute towards the household budget. It was, therefore, considered necessary to introduce short-term vocational training courses for women to generate employment opportunities and thereby help them to raise household incomes.

In the first instance, existing self-employment ventures could be encouraged, e.g. making paper bags, sewing clothes, *biddi* manufacturing, making of household utensils etc. Later organisational assistance could be planned in respect of various cottage activities, like paper making, *papadam* making, manufacturing metal buckets, etc.

Education, General and Vocational

Although literacy *per se* (compared to other developing countries) was high, in actual fact most women and children could barely write their names and could decipher the alphabets only with difficulty. Nearly 40 per cent of the children of school-going age had dropped out of school, mainly for economic reasons such as the lack of school books, clothes and the necessity to eke out an existence by doing odd jobs.

The women by and large lacked an awareness of the general aspects of life. Besides, they lacked vocational skills whereby some income could be generated. It was therefore necessary to provide certain vocational skills to the women, as well as to motivate them to improve their living conditions.

With regard to the children, it was felt necessary to have some provision of school books, clothes, etc. for those in need. This could be made possible through the assistance schemes of the CMC and the voluntary social work agencies. To overcome problems of admission, necessary steps would have to be taken so that the schools in the area could temporarily suspend, where appropriate, certain rules, e.g. submission of birth certificates and payment of facilities' fees before admission.

Health and Family

Child and Family Welfare Centre

Considering that infant mortality in large shanty areas was 53.1 per hundred births (1976) and 46.7 in small shanties, it was obvious that children were lacking the desirable care. The large family sizes were evidently an indication of absence of family life education. The establishment of a Child and Family Welfare Centre at Henamulla was considered therefore as a prerequisite for the social development of the area. The establishment of such a centre envisaged the opening of a Day Care Centre for pre-school children of working parents, which would be established under the auspices of a non-government social work agency. The Department of Probation and Child Care Services would assist such a centre by way of per capita maintenance grants towards the children cared for, and also by way of *ad hoc* grants towards the upkeep of buildings and the purchase of equipment, furniture etc.

The Child and Family Welfare Centre would be established using the resources of the Day Care Centre. The project envisaged the development of programmes in this centre to reach the family through the child. This would involve a readjustment of the use of the existing organisational structure (building, land, personnel etc.) of the Day Care Centre by extension of existing services benefiting the child and the family. These services would include family planning and provide increasing opportunities to people around the Day Care Centre for a better life.

Some of the services that would be provided at these centres would be:

maternal and child welfare,
family planning and family counselling,
health education,
adult education,
milk feeding,
nutrition education,
vocational guidance and training,
outdoor and indoor sports activities.

Community Health Programme

Poor sanitary conditions - use of bucket latrines, absence of sewage, no pipe-borne water, swampy pools on roads and house sites - all pointed towards the need for an intensified Community Health Programme. This programme would utilise the services and personnel of the CMC, the government and voluntary social work agencies.

Recreation and Welfare

Because the community lacked any form of recreation or welfare facilities, need for a community hall was immediate. This would serve partly as a reading room, and also provide space for indoor recreation and youth welfare work, thereby becoming the focal point of communal activity.

Recognising that the main activities in the area during recreation time were gambling and drinking alcohol (both leading to law and order problems), it was felt necessary to launch an intensive programme highlighting the evils of these addictions.

Although the needs of the community had been identified, work in all areas could not be started at once. In June 1979, the Red Cross Association started a weekly milk distribution service for children. This service was however temporarily discontinued because of certain transport difficulties and problems related to milk preparation. In early 1980, a programme of physical upgrading sponsored by the Dutch Government was planned. Initially, amenities and infrastructure were to be provided for the whole community and a number of "core houses" were to be built on vacant land for families who could afford a rent of around Rs. 25 per month.

Two other non-governmental organisations which had been operating even earlier at Henamulla initiated welfare programmes. In 1980 Sarvodaya, in cooperation with four unemployed women from Henamulla, planned a pre-school centre for 40 children; whilst a Buddhist group initiated a Sunday school for some 250 children. Later in the year, the Probation and Child Care Department decided to start a Day Care Centre for some 30 children.

In order to make the slum dwellers active partners in community development programmes, a city-based non-governmental organisation panel was formed. This panel was encouraged to meet monthly and discuss ways and means of supplementing the planned activities.

In 1981, at the time of the visit to the slum area, several agencies, governmental and non-governmental were operating (some directly whilst others indirectly). In the main, the work entrusted to them was:

Colombo Municipality	Family Health Training (previously done by the Family Planning Association)
Common Amenities Board	Toilet and water improvement
Sri Lanka Women's Bureau (in collaboration with UNICEF)	Vocational training for women

Charity Commissioner's Department	Monetary help to community
Urban Development Authority	Physical upgrading

Whereas the UDA received financial aid from the Dutch Government, the Colombo Municipality and Women's Bureau were financially backed by the Government of Sri Lanka (the latter also being assisted by UNICEF). Both the UNDP and the World Bank also committed themselves to financial assistance for a period of two years.

TRAINING IN INCOME-GENERATING SKILLS AMONG WOMEN IN HENAMULLA

In deference to the Government's aim to improve the living standards of the low-income groups, an integrated project was launched to serve the low-income sector in the slums and shanties of the Henamulla area in Colombo City.

UNICEF's direct involvement in this project commenced in 1979 when it assisted the Common Amenities Board (CAB) in providing basic common amenities such as latrines, bathrooms and standpipes to the tenement and shanty gardens in Colombo. Since then, the CAB has signed a protocol with UNICEF for the provision of nearly $ 520,000 to provide amenities to these marginal groups.

Other than UNICEF, three major government agencies were involved in this project. In addition to the CAB, which was to handle a major component of physical upgrading of the sector, the Colombo Municipal Council and Women's Bureau undertook the task of organising these communities and providing them with health education and services along with training in skills which would provide employment opportunities for women. The project administration was done in close collaboration with the Urban Development Authority.

The focus of attention in the case of the Women's Bureau was the unskilled women of the locality. It took upon itself the task of:

1. training women in selected productive skills such as book-binding, coir-rope production, bakery and *papadam* making;

2. providing information on the basic techniques to better family living in the sphere of hygiene and sanitation, child care, family health and family planning, budgeting of household consumption and savings;

3. providing leadership in women for the development and sustaining of community activities for self-reliance;

4. training the programme staff in sociological and community development skills;

5. training the staff in all subject matters related to project activities, i.e. economics of small-scale enterprises, methods and techniques of training and extension, and programme planning and management.

A working committee to implement the work of the project was appointed, representing the Ministry of Local Government, the Department of Small Industries, the Common Amenities Board, the Sri Lanka Women's Conference, UNICEF and the Women's Bureau. This committee was expected to meet regularly and help in monitoring the programme. Representatives of the Women's Bureau on their part also attended the monthly City Community Development Council meetings held by the Colombo Municipality to coordinate the UNICEF-assisted project in Colombo.

A Project Adviser of UNICEF was associated at the initial stage of the project on a short assignment. Today a Project Officer who is paid by UNICEF on a monthly basis has been appointed to follow up the project work. That person helps to organise training programmes for women, coordinate with existing institutions which are related to project activities, follow up and implement project proposals, and regularly evaluate and monitor the projects.

Development of the Project

In September 1979, all women above fifteen years of age in Henamulla received a letter in Tamil and Sinhalese from the Women's Bureau with an invitation to attend a meeting in Henamulla to discuss their needs and priorities for income-generation. In spite of rainy weather, more than 200 women turned up. The women made it clear that they wanted jobs, not training, unless the training led directly to an income. During the following week the women themselves prepared a list with 131 names of women who wanted to start income-generating activities, e.g. *papadam* making, *beedi* labelling, soap making, pasting of paper bags, and packeting. Many women, most of them unmarried, said they would prefer to work outside Henamulla, but the majority of the married ones, especially the Muslim women, indicated their preference for home-based work.

Another meeting was held at which it was planned that a full-day study tour of work sites with women from Henamulla would be undertaken to give them broader horizons of employment possibilities. The actual study visits were made to a bakery, a book-binding shop, a coir-rope production centre, and homes in the slums where thread-balls and joss-sticks were made. The study programme was considered a great success by the ten participants, who had been selected by the women themselves on an ethnically representative basis.

Coir-rope Production

Following the recommendations of Mr Bandula de Silva, Director, Department of Small Industries, and the Project Committee, training in coir-rope production was started in Henamulla in January 1980. Henamulla was the only area which had enough space to start coir-rope production. Ten women from Henimulla had their first introduction to coir-rope production in October at the Ambatala Centre just outside Colombo. Initially a full-time paid woman demonstrator was provided to give a two-month training course in coir-rope production in Henamulla. The UDA allocated space in its building in Henamulla for raw materials, equipment and coir rope. The DSI also agreed to provide all raw materials and market the finished product.

Although, in the beginning, the women participating in the programme received Rs.5 per day from the DSI during the training period, today the stipend of Rs.150 per month is being given by UNICEF. After gaining experience the trainees were able to earn Rs.3 per day in addition to the stipend. At least 20 women today receive training for four or five hours per day. After the training programme, they are able to get a reasonable "income support" from coir-rope production.

UNICEF has given the Women's Bureau financial assistance in procuring the necessary equipment from the DSI - five coir-rope spinning sets, work tables, shelves, benches, cupboards, chairs and a weighing machine.

By and large this training is being given to the illiterate and semi-literate women of the area, in the 18-22 age group. The training imparted to these women is successful, but their income does not exceed Rs.200 per month which is not considered adequate by them. It was further observed that women considered coir-rope production work to be associated with the low caste people and so they tended to avoid participation in this work.

Book-binding Project

Ten girls, aged between 18 and 22 years, whether married or unmarried, having passed grade 8 are taken as trainees for book-binding, which in Sri Lanka is not considered to be a traditional occupation for women. The period of training is for three months at the Government Press, during which time they are given a stipend of Rs.212 per month by the National Apprenticeship Board. During the period of a general strike in 1980 all the trainees got employment in the Press on daily wages. Later the trainees organised themselves into a cooperative book-binding society at Henamulla, and today they are engaged in the production of books for office use. Firm established orders are obtained from the Colombo Municipality, cooperative societies and the Charity Commissioner's Department, which are then implemented by the trainees. On an average, the earnings of the women in this trade range from Rs.300 to Rs.400 per month.

Bakery Training

This is another venture where 25 determined women have invaded a domain monopolised by men. Training is provided at the Marketing Department Bakery for one year to girls of between 18 and 22 years who have passed grade 8. On completion of their training it is hoped they will get employment at the Marketing Department Bakery, which will ensure a salary of Rs.300-400 per month.

PROPOSED PROJECTS FOR 1981-83

1. *Expansion of on-going projects*

   (a) Coir-rope project: expansion to produce coir brooms, mats and carpets.

   (b) Book-binding project: target of four additional book-binding cooperatives by 1983.

   (c) Bakery project: subsequent to training, either to help women to be self-employed or to take up jobs in the Marketing Department Bakery.

2. *New projects*

   (a) Leadership training programme. It has been decided to train 50 girls from each Community Development Council of the Colombo Municipality to take the leadership in their own community.

   (b) Textile weaving project, sponsored by Barbara Sansoni Ltd. It is proposed that a textile weaving project be organised to train 44 women and produce textiles for the Barbara Sansoni Company.

   (c) Electrical wiring, radio repairs and carpentry, etc.

The Department of Local Government, with aid from the World Bank, is proposing to organise a vocational training centre to train young men and women in these fields. Thirteen girls from urban slums will receive vocational training in these areas.

In order to make a physical improvement to the area, the Women's Bureau collaborating with the Common Amenities Board, has accelerated construction work, altered existing bucket latrines, provided community taps and built brick houses. Approximately 15 per cent of the population today have benefited from this work.

In the sphere of family health education, which earlier was the task of the Colombo Municipality, the Women's Bureau, assisted by the Family Planning

Association, has created a cadre of health personnel designated "Health Wardens". The Health Wardens concern themselves with health education, maintenance of environmental sanitation, and community development work. Today, in fact, they have become an active channel of communication between the slum dwellers on the one hand and public health personnel (with regard to environmental health), public health nurses and public health midwives (with regard to maternity and child-care problems) on the other.

The training of the Health Wardens is for a period of six to eight weeks under the direction of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Subsequently they get a certificate from the Municipality and are then allotted three wards each and assisted there by labourers. They emphasise environmental hygiene. In addition to looking at posters depicting the detrimental effect of flies and mosquitoes, the slum dwellers learn about health from radio programmes, film shows and exhibitions on maternal and child care.

The Health Wardens at Henamulla, with the assistance of other Public Health personnel of the Colombo Municipality and other governmental officers working in the area, are assisting the slum dwellers to establish a nuclear Community Development Council. The Council is to comprise at least 75 householders (interested community residents), a Health Warden (Secretary of the Council); a teacher from a local school and representatives from religious organisations and other non-government organisations.

The representatives of various agencies operating in the area envisage further improvements in the existing conditions of the slum, e.g. upgrading of water supply and latrine facilities for another 15 per cent of the population, initiating of pilot projects to provide basic education for children not attending schools, establishment of more day-care centres for children of working mothers, and extension of vocational training programmes for women in the field of *papadam* preparation, educational toys, rattan-weaving of chairs, pasting paper bags, and soap and candle preparation.

It is hoped that through an integrated approach women will not only be active participants in national development but also, through greater awareness, improve their family life. With the success obtained in the area of Henamulla, similar activities are expected to start in other selected slum areas of Colombo.

IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME ON THE COMMUNITY

Interviews with the slum dwellers revealed that they felt the impact of the programme basically in respect of the improvement of the physical conditions in Henamulla. Today, they note, several brick houses had come up, a large number of bucket latrines had been constructed, and pipe water was available in taps (one tap for every 50 households). Owing to frequent visits and talks by representatives of various governmental and non-governmental agencies, greater awareness had been created on aspects of health and nutrition. Whereas people had earlier hesitated to visit the dispensary, located 100 yards away from the slum, today most mothers lose no time in taking medical advice. While mothers have become aware of the need for a nutritious diet, yet paucity of funds compels them to live on an unbalanced menu; even today several cook only one meal a day of rice and seasonal vegetables, while others who have two meals, although non-vegetarians, can scarcely afford fish or meat.

Interviewees felt that training for school drop-outs was needed more than literacy classes. In the main, the slum dwellers felt that some action was needed to further improve their household income. On account of the income-

generating programme introduced by the Women's Bureau, there has been an additional income of Rs.250 to Rs.300 per month among women who have received training. The supplementary income is being spent mainly on improvement of diet in the home. In their view, the training facilities offered are too few in number and limited to barely 30 women in each area.

On the whole, the impact of the Project has been felt by the entire community, and women in particular. Although the family size even today exceeds five or six members, members of the younger generation feel that they would limit the family to two or three children only. The community members are aware of the high cost of living and desire to have more than one earning member in the family, emphasis being more on vocational rather than academic education.

MAJOR CONSTRAINTS OF THE PROGRAMME

The Women's Bureau felt the following to be the major constraints in reaching the desired objectives:

1. absence of systematic tabulated data on the situation of women and on those related to the beneficiary groups (this factor makes it difficult to plan future programmes);

2. lack of regular funding for projects - the Women's Bureau was established with foreign funds, and therefore is dependent on other agencies for money required in making any programme a success;

3. lack of coordination between the various agencies operating in the area. Although representatives of all agencies do meet, very often the quorum is not complete; this results in delays and bottlenecks to any programme;

4. scarcity of trained personnel.

In view of the constraints the following recommendations are being made:

1. Data collection - more specific data should be collected covering the beneficiaries of the project. This data needs to be systematically tabulated.

2. Regular funding - not only should the Central Government allocate money for the running of the Women's Bureau, but monetary provision should also be made for project activities.

3. Training programmes should be initiated for personnel at the district level. These individuals should be given a greater understanding of the problems faced by the women in slum areas.

4. Decisions on programme implementation should be vested in one authority rather than being dependent upon the consensus of opinion of all the representatives at the monthly meetings.

5. A committee should be formed to monitor and evaluate the programmes. At the end of each year, the committee should give an objective review of the various programmes.

Observations

Several things emerge from the present case study which could be considered if a replica of this model is to be followed in other urban towns of developing countries.

1. Although it is advantageous to have several government and non-governmental agencies functioning in different areas, progress of the project tends to be held up on account of lack of cooperation and coordination. It is therefore suggested that implementation of action should be vested in one authority only.

2. Credit facilities should be more easily available through the Cooperative Bank or from a nationalised bank through a trade union. This would prevent the already deprived people from pawning articles on heavy interest. The need for credit will be even greater when women enter the self-employment field for which money may be required in the initial stages.

3. Greater provision for developing income-generating skills among women could be made, but along with this a more organised marketing infrastructure must be created to keep the products moving.

4. Considering that drunkeness, gambling etc., lead to frequent marital conflicts, it would be desirable to have a community (*panchayat*) council assisted by a trained social worker from among the respected inhabitants. This council could meet every fortnight to sort out household problems.

5. It would be feasible and desirable to have common community halls where recreational facilities for young and old, men and women, could be provided, e.g. table tennis, carrom, television, badminton, etc.

6. Leadership within the community needs to be developed; this may help in curbing the existing anti-social incidents.

WORKING TOWARDS SELF-RELIANCE - THE KIRILLAPONE PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Creating general awareness, in terms of helping women to make use of existing facilities as well as training them in skills which are marketable, evidently are important facets of any social development programme. Centuries of conditioning have resulted in hesitancy among women themselves to accept a social role other than that of a housewife/mother. The biggest task today, therefore, is to reach out to this group in a manner acceptable to them.

The present case study concerns itself with an integrated programme for the entire community (women in particular) which at first involved itself with the children of the shanty dwellers and later embraced activities for the community at large.

With the ultimate objective of making the slum dwellers self-reliant, the US Save the Children Organisation worked towards setting up a Community Development Society. This Society formed a committee of members selected from the community (including one woman representative) as well as nominees of the US Save the Children Organisation. The main objectives of the Society were to:

1. represent the community in all matters affecting its welfare;

2. improve the social, economic and environmental conditions of the families in the area;

3. strengthen human relations and develop the same through effective leadership among residents;

4. develop self-reliance in the community.

Once the Community Committee was formed, it started to enrol all children over five years of age in schools. Subsequently it concerned itself with the recreational and nutritional problems of the children which involved the mothers. Having generated interest among the mothers, the US Save the Children Organisation started income-generating activities for women as well as activities to improve the general environment of the shanty. In order to ensure the participation of the community, all activities were routed through the Community Committee.

The first part of this case study deals with the brief history of the shanty along with the facilities available prior to the intervention of the US Save the Children Organisation. The second deals with the objectives and work of the Organisation, its impact, constraints and observations.

BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE SHANTY

The shanty of Kirillapone, situated off the high level road bordering the Kirillapone Canal, has many of the features of the regular shanties of Colombo. Originally a small group of squatters settled on government land bordering the canal. As housing problems became more acute in Colombo, the shanty attracted more settlers largely due to its proximity to the market centre of Kirillapone.

Prior to the entry of any agency on the scene, several facilities were available to the shanty dwellers.

1. The Kirillapone Maternity and Child Health Centre and adjacent to it, the Government Ayurvedic Dispensary. However, few shanty dwellers patronised either this dispensary or the Government Dispensary for Western Medicine. The majority preferred to attend the Colombo South Hospital, situated within a distance of two miles.

2. A number of major schools within the limit of the two-mile radius defined as the residence qualification for admission to school. However, few shanty children had access to these schools owing to lack of money for the purchase of school books and school uniforms. In 1979 24 per cent of the children of school-going age were not enrolled in school. As in most urban centres, there were also a number of private, pre-school nurseries in the area. Their fees were prohibitive, however, and none of the shanty children attended them.

3. Children in the Kirillapone shanty had within easy distance a number of recreational facilities. These were:

   (i) the Kirillapone Public Library;
   (ii) a community centre which had facilities for carrom, draughts, chess, gymnastics, weight-lifting, volley-ball and netball. Sewing classes were also held for girls, while young people (mostly males) used the recreational facilities. Investigations revealed that while a few of the females from the more well-to-do families in the shanty attended the sewing classes, hardly anyone else made use of the community centre;
   (iii) two playgrounds available to residents in the area, one by the library and the other a mile away at the Apex Children's Park on the Havelock Road. Shanty children did not, as a rule, have access to these facilities. Their play was restricted to the immediate area surrounding their homes.

4. The most important consumer service to any citizen of Sri Lanka is the Cooperative Society, where subsidised rice and flour, pulses and condiments (in short supply), cloth, milk foods, soap and other household necessities are provided at government-controlled prices. Five "Coops" served the shanty and were located within 100 to 500 yards of the shanty. In addition,the Janawasema Consumer Service, the Marketing Department, and the Fisheries Cooperation sales outlet were located on the borders of the shanty.

In summary, it may be observed that a number of facilities were located in close proximity to the shanty. However, access to these facilities was controlled by other factors. Tedious procedures, and disparities in income, dress and life-style, inhibited shanty dwellers from availing themselves of the facilities provided by the government and private agencies. It was only in the informal sector that shanty dwellers had access to any real facilities.

Thus, a vital need identified here was to provide links between the shanty and the formal sector. Several factors, however, had to be borne in mind before considering implementation of any programme, for example:

1. The educational level amongst the dwellers was relatively low. 11.3 per cent of the population were illiterate, 48.6 per cent had received schooling up to grade V; 31.6 per cent had been schooled up to grade IX; only 8.2 per cent had studied up to the GCE (Ordinary Level) examination, which is the minimum level of qualification for white-collar employment. Hardly 0.14 per cent had actually obtained the examination certificate.

2. The employment situation was equally bleak. Of the total labour force of 877, 41.6 per cent (357) were unemployed, a figure which included the majority of women, who were classified as housewives but were nonetheless employable; 21.5 per cent (189) were in permanent employment; 31.1 per cent (273) in casual employment; and 5.3 per cent (47) were self-employed. A total of 197, or 22.4 per cent of the labour force, were employed in the informal sector, either as casual hands or as self-employed professionals. Eleven (1.2 per cent) were on the dole.

3. Sanitation and hygienic habits in the area were also far from satisfactory. Two latrine complexes, housing eighteen latrines with separate units for males and females, were situated within a hundred yards of each other. Residents at the further corners of the shanty had erected their own makeshift latrines rather than make the long trek to the municipal latrines. These latrines usually drained into the canal, in which children immersed themselves in order to catch worms which they sold to the aquaria in the city. The municipal latrines were of the bucket-type, and although the regulations required the municipal scavenger service to clean the buckets daily, the service was being performed twice or thrice a week only.

4. In addition to the fact that the shanty dwellings were small and ill-constructed, approximately 41.5 per cent of the households had no kitchen but cooked in the same room in which they ate and slept; 7.5 per cent cooked outside the house, while 37.7 per cent had a kitchen within the structure of the house. Lighting arrangements were inadequate. The majority (71.6 per cent) made use of crude oil lamps; 15 per cent owned hurricane lamps; 13.2 per cent used a combination of both. There was no electricity in the shanty. Residents complained that this raised grave security problems. The deeper one went into the shanty, the greater the risk one faced of being waylaid and robbed. Shanty people lived somewhat primitive lives, perhaps even more primitive than in the remotest village in the rural interior.

Employment of women in the area was negligible, primarily because of their lack of marketable skills. Hardly 22 per cent were employed as labourers, domestic servants, paper bag makers, traders, seamstresses, traffic wardens, and textile workers.

The income of employed women ranged from below Rs.50 to over Rs.200 per month. Their reason for working mainly was to increase the family income, while some worked because their husbands were unemployed.

The majority of women worked outside the home, but expressed a preference for working within the home. The reasons for this preference varied widely; they included convenience, ability to look after one's children while working, social opinion that "a woman should stay at home", pressure of the peer group, disapproval of women working outside the home, husbands' disapproval of wives working outside the home, and factors related to pressures within the

home. Those who preferred to work outside the home cited better opportunities for income as the reason.

The problems of shanty working mothers as a whole showed not much difference from the average Sri Lankan working mother. More than half the women had too much work at home or felt that their children were neglected. Some complained of constant ill-health. Other problems were the lack of satisfactory jobs, training, or education. Among the non-working women, the majority seemed to have had to stop working because of illness, while others had difficulties with household arrangements and a variety of specific personal circumstances such as migration and elopement.

The skills of the women were limited. While 50 per cent were unskilled and expressed a desire for training in some skill which would enable them to earn a livelihood, 10 per cent were skilled in cooking and other domestic work; 16.6 per cent were skilled in sewing; 3.3 per cent in laundering; 5 per cent had weaving skills; 5 per cent were skilled in bookbinding, 5 per cent in batik production and 5 per cent in paper bag production. Of those who were unemployed, 82 per cent expressed a desire to work if employment was available. They identified the main obstacles to their employment as lack of jobs and the disapproval of their husbands.

PROGRAMME AIMS

Considering the needs of the community the US Save the Children Organisation decided on the following overall objectives for its programme:

1. improvement of health and environmental sanitation;

2. systematisation of maternal, child health, family planning and nutritional programmes, and training of personnel for maintaining them;

3. integration of women in community activity;

4. promotion of income-generating activity for women;

5. education and youth recreation activities;

6. training in skills;

7. inauguration of a funeral assistance scheme;

8. election of the Community Committee and directing its activity towards the goal of self-reliance.

Impact of the Programme

Health and Sanitation/Nutrition

At the initial stage of the programme, adequate health facilities were identified as a basic need of the community. Although the situation of the Kirillapone Project area was within a stone's throw of the municipal dispensary, the inhabitants did not have easy access to its readily available services. The mere fact that they were residents of this shanty, a centre for numerous unlawful activities, was the primary factor for discrimination. The unwelcome treatment they were subjected to at the dispensary kept them away from it except in cases of serious illness. Therefore the clinic opened by the US Save the Children Organisation for the community was very well received. Although it may have appeared to be a duplication of a service already in existence, in fact it catered for a much-felt need. Through the clinic a host of other inter-related health problems were solved. The

fortnightly paediatric clinic run by volunteer doctors served all children up to twelve years old in the community. While the clinic attended to all minor ailments, cases that needed specialist attention were referred to Kalubowila and the General Hospital, Colombo. It maintained a health record sheet with the individual medical history for each child.

Although, at the start, this clinic was geared only towards curative medicine, it later became the clinical training ground for the health workers who were selected from within the community. The clinical symptoms, the cause of the disease and the treatment of most cases were discussed at the clinic for the benefit of the health auxiliaries under training. Further, they received lectures on the most common diseases prevalent in the community as well as on other communicable diseases.

To date this health clinic is run on a fortnightly basis with the help of six volunteer doctors and a volunteer pharmacist from the municipality. On an average at each clinic about 100 patients receive treatment. In addition to the weekly clinic, a trained community health worker is mobilised to dress wounds on a daily basis. An average of 40 people are attended to each day. This has helped both young and old in the community. The health auxiliaries who follow up the immunisation of children under the health programme have been able to obtain complete immunisation for 142 children against tuberculosis, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and poliomyelitis.

Through the Community Committee, health auxiliaries and the women's groups it has been possible to instil in the community the importance of keeping the environment clean. *Shramadans* on a monthly basis have been organised, and garbage containers built.

Although the residents deposit the garbage into these containers, the municipality has failed to empty them regularly. Realising what a health hazard this would be, the community has, on many occasions, burnt the accumulated garbage. The health auxiliaries, assisted by the Community Committee, have converted ten bucket latrines into water-sealed toilets, and another ten are in the process of conversion. The new latrines are regularly washed and kept clean by a member of the community whose wages are paid by the contribution made from all households of the area.

The community has provided the means to build a network of surface drains so as to keep the shanty alleys reasonably dry. The campaign for boiling drinking water is slow but steadily gaining ground. At times, it appears to be unrealistic to insist on boiling water when the cost of fuel has spiralled. However, the introduction of the low cost *Lorena* mud stoves has cut cooking costs considerably.

A low level of income and a high level of malnutrition are often considered inter-related. Data available on the health and nutrition status at Kirillapone confirms the necessity of a closely integrated programme of maternal health, child welfare, nutrition intervention and family planning. The programme of health auxiliaries in the community was designed with this objective in mind. Each health auxiliary is given charge of 30-35 households, and is expected to visit them all at least once a week and record observations in a register. Every adult female in the shanty is placed in a family planning target group, except those who have been sterilised or are above 40 years of age. Every child under five years has been given a nutritional health status. Accordingly it is possible to identify those "at risk", so that the health auxiliaries can motivate and educate mothers to remove children from this category. All pregnant and lactating mothers have their haemoglobin levels tested and marked in this register, and these are regularly

checked. These mothers are also included in the "Thriposha" (protein-fortified cereal) nutrition intervention programme. In the case of pregnant and lactating mothers with haemoglobin of 60 and below, action is taken to improve their condition. After identifying family planning target groups, women are motivated to accept a method. A pregnancy history record, a record of attendance at pre- and post-natal clinics as well as at the family planning clinics is maintained.

Apart from the direct functions involving health, nutrition and family planning, health auxiliaries are able to identify people with specific needs and direct them to the subsidies available from government departments - disabled old people have pleaded for public assistance, partially blind women and children have applied for spectacles, destitute women have appealed for homes for their children, alcoholics have been referred to Alcoholics Anonymous and tubercular patients have been helped to obtain the special living allowance available to them.

To supplement their training in recording and monitoring the health, nutrition,family planning and welfare activities in the community, health auxiliaries are given comprehensive training in all aspects of preventive health, maternal and child health, infant feeding, and personal hygiene at the Hospital for Children. Subsequent to this they attend a series of lectures on child care and nutrition conducted by a doctor. In order to link the services of these trained personnel with the municipal health programme, the health auxiliaries now assist the matron of the Kirillapone Municipal Clinic.

The nutrition intervention programme originally initiated for children under five years has been extended to children from five to twelve. At the start "Thriposha" packets were distributed to malnourished children and to pregnant and lactating mothers. Soon it was discovered that this protein-fortified cereal was not being consumed by the target beneficiaries. Instead it was being sold in the open market. As a remedial measure it was then decided to distribute a prepared Thriposha meal on a daily basis which could be consumed on the spot. At first, some mothers were hostile as they felt the pinch of losing a source of income, but soon the health auxiliaries on their home visits were able to convince them that this meal had become more wholesome with the addition of other ingredients. Through the womens' groups, mothers were also coaxed to prepare the meal along with the health auxiliaries. This was mainly to motivate and train mothers as well as to acquaint them with the nutritional activities. The ultimate objective was to transfer the entire programme into the hands of the mothers. At present three mothers participate in the preparation and three in distribution. Daily 13 babies, 623 children, 86 lactating and 21 pregnant mothers are fed at a total cost of Rs.135 per day.

Integration of Women in Community Activity

The heavy burden of work and multiple roles of women have always been deterents to their effective participation in community development programmes and in decision-making at all levels. On the whole, the integration of women in development is a gradual process. But once they are integrated the entire society benefits.

In Kirillapone, the first steps taken in this direction were to organise women's groups and give representation to women on the Community Committee. They ensured women's participation in the planning of activities which could be later ratified by all members.

An important decision taken by the Community Committee was to provide loans to women who wanted to start an income-generating activity. A number of women thus obtained loans for making string hoppers, crochet lace, pillow cases, garments, etc. In several cases, owing to the poor quality, the women did not find it easy to market the products. Others could only earn a marginal profit but every encouragement was given to get them off the ground. The primary strategy was to promote income-generating activity through training and organising cooperative activity.

Income-generating Activities

As a result of a need expressed by the women, a sewing class was started. Here, women received training in dressmaking and embroidery. At present 20 women are undergoing training. This is likely to be expanded within the next few months to accommodate manufacture of school uniforms on a cooperative basis. So far twelve women have received training in Juki machine operation and fourteen in batik techniques. Very many of the Juki trainees have found employment while the batik trainees have failed to do so.

In the sphere of medicine, eight women are being trained as nursing aides at Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children. This training will come in good stead for them to find employment in private hospitals as attendants. Out of the nine women originally enrolled for training in pre-school teaching, three have dropped out on finding other employment; five completed their training course at Visaka Nursery, of whom one was absorbed into the same institution on her performance; two were selected to undergo special training in a reputed institution on different methods of teaching children under five years; and two are being trained at "Bethlehem" - a creche run by the nuns of the Central Convent, Borella. These women will staff the day care centre to be started at Kirillapone.

Education and Recreational Activities

During a baseline survey, it was brought to light that a large number of children of school-going age, five to fifteen years, were not attending school owing to economic constraints and the ignorance of parents. Sixty-six such children were identified; their prerequisites were supplied, and they were admitted to a recognised school. About ten of them dropped out at the end of that year. The older children who were admitted to school for the first time were too old and obviously did not fit into the grades they were admitted to. The drop-outs on this account could be helped through a functional literacy programme. At the beginning of this year another 58 were admitted to schools. This brought the percentage of school-going children to a total of 83 per cent (the national average is 80 per cent). Every school-going child below twelve years was supplied with materials for a uniform, and all school-going children were given school books (exercise books, pencils and other requirements) twice a year. This welfare measure was a source of strength and encouragement to both children and parents, and is expected to be continued by a revolving fund maintained by the Community Committee.

There have been numerous requests for special English classes from adults and children and also from the sponsors. Adult classes were postponed for lack of teaching material and trained personnel. However, a selected group with education up to grade 9, 10 and "A" level has been incorporated into the week-end English classes conducted by the Department of Education. There are thirteen students attending these classes. This provides them with an additional qualification to secure employment. The tuition fees of Rs.10 per student are borne by the US Save the Children Organisation.

The pre-school trainees, health auxiliaries and nurse aides were handicapped without a working knowledge of English. To help them, a special English crash course was started and is still being continued. Special English classes for all children between five and thirteen years were inaugurated to help all sponsored children to learn English. These classes are of a more formal type but give individual attention to children to help them understand what is taught in school. Each child gets two lessons per week. Two teachers and a volunteer conduct the classes.

Young people, being the backbone of the community, have been roped into many activities to help them improve their mental growth potential, stimulate their talents and skills, and prepare them for productive and fulfilling lives. Open Cub Scout and Boy Scout troops have been formed, and Scout leaders have had their phase I training. A Girl Guide company is in the process of being formed.

Volunteer students from the UN Students Organisation of the Samudradevi Balika Vidyalaya, Nugegoda, conduct a story hour for all children in the shanty every week. This programme has become very popular among children.

Kandyan dancing and Hewisi band classes have drawn children in large numbers. The first opportunity they had to display their talents was the combined celebrations held on account of US Save the Children Day and the traditional New Year festival. Their performance on this occasion clearly showed that the opportunities afforded them had been made full use of.

Training in Skills

The first ever training programme was in association with the Intermediate Technology Development Group of the UK. The low-cost roof-sheet production and brick-making so started have now reached very high levels of technical skill and expertise. So much so that one member of the roof-sheet team was selected to go to Bangladesh to train people in this new skill. It is intended that after the housing project is completed a cooperative will be formed through which the products will be marketed and the profits shared. Thirty men and women have so far been trained in masonry and carpentry. The masonry trainees have worked on the housing models and constructed the network of surface drains, garbage containers and all other construction work in the shanty. Some of these trainees have shown great promise and are able to handle assignments by themselves. With the implementation of the housing programme more hands will be trained. Apart from the training provided at the project site, youths have been sent for training courses in welding (Ceylon Oxygen Company), fitting and motor mechanism (German Technical Institute), and a special course in carpentry (Department of Small Industries, Pemunuwa).

Social Activities

The establishment of a Funeral Assistance Society was solely due to the untiring efforts of the Community Committee. Here, the members are expected to pay an enrolment fee for membership and a monthly subscription thereafter. This entitles them to receive a sum of Rs.700 by way of funeral expenses at a family bereavement. This has been a great achievement for the community.

With the inauguration of this society the members get an opportunity to operate a bank account and handle a considerable amount of money. This really has been a test of their honesty and readiness to shoulder financial responsibilities. There have been eight deaths in the community since the society went into action. In each case the office bearers displayed a high sense of diligence, integrity and responsibility.

Community Committee

A unique feature in this programme is the community participation through a legally elected body. This executive body consists of a president, secretary, treasurer, assistant secretary, assistant treasurer, area representative in respect of each area (five in number), and a women's representative.

The entire community is very enthusiastic about electing their own representatives. The present Committee has proved to be better than the Committees of previous years. It has initiated the settling of community disputes at the combined meetings of the Community Committee/US Save the Children staff. This has been a great breakthrough in the policy planning and decision-making ability of the Kirillapone community. This year US Save the Children Day cum New Year celebrations were handled solely by the Community Committee and they were a great success. This has proved beyond doubt their organisational capabilities, collective responsibility and high sense of discipline. The public image they have created in the area has brought them considerable donations. This has made it possible for them to give away challenge cups and shields for special events, and also a small token for each participant. This is considered an encouragement for greater participation in the years to come. The confidence with which they handled this entire event, and its budgetary formalities, are assurances to the US Save the Children Organisation that they are on the right track towards self help.

FUNDING AGENCIES

The financial support to the organisation comes from America. A unique system operates here. Each Sri Lankan child enrolled by the US Save the Children Organisation has a pen-friend in America who is expected to support the welfare activities of the child. In addition, private donations from the USA are frequently forthcoming for various other activities.

CONSTRAINTS AND OBSERVATIONS

To a certain extent, lack of finance appears to be a factor preventing the organisation from expanding its activities. However, it is hoped that the success obtained might induce other organisations to join hands in giving the required support.

The basic handicap to creating a feeling of self-reliance among women is the absence of a proper marketing structure for the sale of their produce. No quality control is being exercised, and there is no assurance that their goods will find a ready and steady market. This handicap could perhaps lead to the women losing interest in the programme. Observation reveals that in respect of social awareness and physical health, the inhabitants of the area have benefited considerably. In fact, wherever their rights were being denied, the women were able to act as pressure groups in bringing about redress from the authorities concerned.

Case Study from Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

The Kanita (Women and Children) Project on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia has one feature in common with the Nirmal Project in Maharashtra. Both involve university students in activities concerned with rural women's development. In the Nirmal Project the students, at least initially, were reluctant to participate in grass-roots living. But the Malaysia study emphasises that the students became highly involved and matured greatly as a result of the experience.

The Kanita Project's philosophy and methodology is described in great detail. Suffice it to say here that it was organised for the University of Penang and grew around the idea of participating research. Such research involved students living in the villages where their target groups were and it involved the targeted women in identifying their own needs and means of meeting them.

As is emphasised in almost all the case studies in this handbook, one of the most desirable outcomes of development activities for and with poor and disadvantaged women is a change in attitude, a gathering of confidence and self-esteem, and the growth of leadership qualities amongst the women themselves. The Kanita Project claims to have seen these changes take place amongst some of the poorest women in Malaysia today.

THE KANITA PROJECT, MALAYSIA: WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia, comprising the Malayan Peninsular, Sabah and Sarawak, is possibly one of the most rapidly developing nations in South East Asia. It has a highly stable economy which is mainly dependent on export earnings from oil, tin, rubber, palm oil and a variety of other agricultural produce. With a population of twelve million, Malaysian society is multi-ethnic and comprises three main ethnic groups, the Malays, Chinese and Indians, which constitute 53 per cent, 35 per cent and 10 per cent respectively of the total population. The remaining 2 per cent consists of Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, Eurasians, Europeans, and aborigines or *Orang Asli*. The multi-ethnic composition of Malaysian society reflects socio-economic differences, in terms of occupation and income, with the Malays being mainly agriculturalists living in the rural areas of Peninsular Malaysia, the Chinese concentrating on processing and retailing businesses and industries in the urban areas and the Indians providing the main source of labour in the estates and plantations which sprawl between Malaysian villages and the towns and cities.

In Peninsular Malaysia, although the average monthly income per household was M$ 546 in 1976, radical differences exist berween the average monthly incomes of the rural and the urban population, that of urban areas being M$ 417. In 1979, with the poverty line being set at M$ 282 on a monthly average, it was found that 54.6 per cent of the rural population lived below the poverty line.* In these economically depressed areas, Malay Muslims continue to maintain traditional economic activities centred around the cultivation of rice, rubber smallholdings, fruit cultivation, and poultry breeding. An inadequate infrastructure in terms of road accessibility, public and private transportation, and telecommunication systems has reduced the possibilities and opportunities for wider marketing and distribution of agricultural commodities. Similarly, such under-served areas are generally without potable water or electricity, posing an added encumbrance to domestic activities and chores. Inaccessibility and inadequate water supply contribute to the ineffectiveness of public health services which are rather poorly implemented and maintained under such physical conditions. Schools and educational facilities are relatively inferior to those in less physically remote areas and urban centres. Physical distance and dependence on public transport which is usually irregular causes a high rate of absenteeism from schools. Absenteeism and a high drop-out rate are also related to the problem of child labour; children between the ages of ten to fifteen are called upon to help their parents in the rice fields during transplanting and harvesting,

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* These figures are obtained from the Mid-Term Review of the Third Malaysia Plan, Malaysian Government Printers, Kuala Lumpur, 1979, p.46. The poverty line as set by the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department has shifted from M$ 200 (average monthly earnings) in 1970, to M$ 282 in 1979. In 1970, 65 per cent of Malay households in Peninsular Malaysia lived below the poverty line, compared to 26 per cent and 39 per cent of Chinese and Indian households respectively.

or to provide an additional source of income for the household by working as wage labourers in neighbouring plantations or farms.

In Peninsular Malaysia, the roles played by women of the various ethnic communities are influenced by different social values and customs, but essentially, the marginal status of women in society is an accepted norm. Culturally Malaysians belong to a patriarchal society. The majority of the women are under-educated or illiterate and in most instances are not even aware of their own rights and privileges.

In rural Malaysian society the problems of children, in terms of health, nutrition, education and psychological development, usually stem from the low nutritional and educational status of their mothers. Together, the mother and the child represent the most vulnerable physical and social unit in the family. Although the health of women and children has improved tremendously during the last decade, the health of rural women is still not satisfactory. Anaemia, malnutrition and other diseases are still widespread and pregnancy and childbearing are still hazardous to health. The maternal death rate is still very high in some areas, as is the foetal wastage rate through miscarriages and still births. In 1975 the maternal death rate for Peninsular Malaysia was 26 per cent per 1,000 live births. Out of the total number 85 per cent occurred amongst the Malays, the majority of whom reside in rural areas.

So long as the woman's health is poor, she is unable to perform her basic functions as wife, mother and homemaker, and she will also be unable to participate effectively in, and enjoy the benefits of, development. Greater efforts are necessary in the provision not only of basic health infrastructure but also of services, in health and nutrition, education and motivation and family planning.

Among the youth, the high drop-out rate in schools is often attributed to poverty and low achievement motivation; it aggravates youth unemployment and underemployment. More often than not, young people are even excluded from certain types of vocational and technical training requiring minimal literacy. Training facilities for girls from rural areas are particularly limited and unsatisfactory, accelerating the rural-urban drift which has resulted in young girls being employed in factories that do not provide technical training or the development of a skill that guarantees long-term productivity and employment.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

Academic institutions in Malaysia have not devoted much research to women and children's studies, nor have they devised programmes that may directly or indirectly improve the living conditions of women and children. It is in response to this problem that the Kanita Project, whose name is derived from the Malay words for children (*kanak-kanak*) and women (*wanita*) was initiated in June 1978, following discussions with UNICEF and the Dean of the School of Social Sciences, University Sains Malaysia, Penang. Between June 1978 and January 1979, the Kanita research team held a series of discussions to formulate a feasible research programme. It was decided that the group would focus its research on the most economically depressed Malay communities in the State of Kedah, in Peninsular Malaysia. Furthermore, it was felt that the programme should employ a much more action-oriented approach, whereby women could be encouraged and motivated to express their problems and needs and formulate plans of action using their own initiative skills and, as far as possible, local community resources. In this way, women could participate directly in village level decisions and be active agents of change.

The Kanita team also realised the importance of working within the existing constraints of the Malay social structure. More specifically, it was necessary to recognise the limitations of working with a group of women who continue to be bound by certain traditional social institutions, that may seem incompatible with action-oriented research. These are:

1. the maintenance of an ego-centred kinship network with a strong patriarchal bias;

2. the prevalence of Malay social norms in a society where women enjoy a high status in the domestic sphere and a relatively marginal status in the political and economic spheres;

3. the political structure of Malay villages in which men dominate the decision-making processes through both ascribed and achieved roles;

4. the perpetuation of cultural beliefs, taboos and superstitions that limit the responses of women and men to modernity and change;

5. the entrenched custom of women working in the traditional time-consuming or labour-consuming economic activities, particularly in rice and rubber cultivation.

Given these existing constraints, it was realistic to assume that while women and children would be the focal point of Kanita's research activities, it was crucial to work closely with the men - formal and informal village leaders, ritual specialists, and officials within the existing government machinery on the local, state and federal level. Simultaneously, it was imperative that the research team also understood the functions of *ad hoc* communal and informal groups and networks, communication flow patterns, kinds and levels of conceptualisation of information and ideas and symbols of change.

Objectives

The objectives of the Kanita programme of social research are:

1. to identify the problems and needs of women, children and youth in Peninsular Malaysia, with particular emphasis on rural areas which are economically depressed;

2. to work with the village population and the government through community service programmes for the purpose of developing the skills and resources of villagers so that women and children can directly or indirectly benefit from these programmes;

3. to attempt to develop self-reliance and initiative in women, within the existing constraints of the social system of rural Malay society;

4. to assist in the development of the theory and methodology of community service programmes, by recognising and analysing contextual, situational and cultural problems that arise in the formulation and implementation of these programmes and by using suitable social indicators for evaluation;

5. to bridge the gap between academia and development by training academics and students in applied social research, and by integrating research on women, youth and children into the teaching curriculum of the university.

Research Components of the Programme

Three research components were developed in February 1979 to initiate a series of research activities in different areas in Kedah.

Participatory Research

This focuses its activities in the District of Kubang Pasu. A full time researcher and a developmentalist (who lives in the village for considerable periods of time) employ participant observational techniques and schedules to gather data, establish rapport and gain acceptance from the villagers. The objective is to help the villagers establish plans of action to overcome physical and socio-economic problems which impede the physical and social development of women and children.

Study Service

This involves students in a "live and learn" community programme in the District of Padang Terap. Generally, students are trained by members of the Kanita research team to gain acceptance from the villagers by participating in village level activities and integrating with the community as a whole. Each student is fostered into a family and maintains a relationship with the same family over a period of two years. Gradually, the student acquires an understanding of the problems of the villagers and, with the help of the Kanita team and a field assistant, formulates programmes that can help elevate the living conditions of women and children.

Evaluative Research

Administered by a team comprising a sociologist, an anthropologist and a research assistant, evaluative research attempts to assess the effectiveness of the participatory research and study service programmes in Kanita through:

- providing a continuous evaluation procedure with the purpose of improving the research design or methodology of participatory research and study service;

- using an evaluation procedure in the form of an evaluative survey, conducted before and after the programmes to test the reliability and validity of some social indicators used, such as participation, leadership, and referential groups;

- comparing the community service approaches in participatory research and study service with other governmental community service programmes, particularly the Family Development, Applied Nutrition and Primary Health Care Programmes in Malaysia. An in-depth study of these community service programmes is also undertaken in the District of Yan, through schedules, depth interviews and participant observational techniques.

Between 1979 and 1981 the Kanita Research Programme received the attention and interest of local academics, social administrators, government officials and several foreign researchers. Various seminars, workshops and discussion groups were held to discuss the progress of the project and to evaluate the results and findings of the various research components within the Kanita programme. Members of the Kanita team also attended several seminars and workshops, both local and international, to keep up with current research programmes on women and children as well as to develop a better understanding of Kanita's own research problems, in relation to other comparative research in the field of women and children. The support Kanita has received from UNICEF, several local government agencies, and universities has finally resulted in the formal integration of the Kanita Research Programme with the existing government programmes on women and children. More specifically, Kanita is since 1982 considered as a programme within the National Advisory

Council on the Integration of Women in Development (NACIWID). This Council is based in the Prime Minister's Department, at Kuala Lumpur, and is represented by local academics, government administrators and prominent voluntary social workers. Specifically, the objectives of the Council are as follows:

1. to serve as a coordinating, consultative and advisory body to the Government and between the Government and non-governmental women's organisations;

2. to arouse national consciousness amongst women on their role and responsibilities towards nation-building;

3. to ensure the full integration of women in national development;

4. to enable women to develop their potential capabilities to the maximum;

5. to arouse the awareness of women on their rights;

6. to contribute towards the promotion of international peace.

It can be seen that the broader objectives laid out in NACIWID are compatible with Kanita's more specific objectives in applied social research. With the integration of Kanita into NACIWID, it is possible that the local universities may be able to play a more positive and effective role in assisting towards the development of social policies and programmes on women, youth and children in Malaysia. In this way, research activities on a regional or state level may be more easily channelled into the wider national network of activities and programmes on women, youth and children.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Organisational Structure

The project is administered by a Convenor who is a full-time member of the academic staff of the School of Social Sciences and is responsible to the Dean of the School. The Convenor's main function is to coordinate all the activities relating to the programme, including the development, planning and evaluation of research activities within each component. The Convenor is also responsible for correspondence and communication with local and international agencies as well as organising other related activities such as seminars, workshops, meetings, the hiring of consultants and liaising with government agencies, women's organisations and voluntary associations. Other members of the academic staff in Sociology, Anthropology and Development Studies work closely with the Convenor as principal investigators in programming the project and delegating duties to the project assistant, researcher, field work assistant, research assistants and students. Each principal investigator is ultimately responsible for organising the different research components of the programme, i.e. study service, participatory research and evaluative research (see Chart I). However, they jointly participate in the evaluation of the programme. Principal investigators play a primary role in establishing rapport with members of the community and government agencies and in obtaining their cooperation and goodwill.

Principal investigators in the study service programme assist in the organisation and administration of all student activities and are responsible

for training students in techniques of community work and community service and for organising seminars and workshops, once students develop field experience in community service and community work. In participatory research the principal investigators involved work closely with a full-time researcher in the field, though both undertake action-oriented research aimed at creating in the villagers an awareness of their problems. The principal investigators in evaluative research plan the research design to evaluate the Kanita programme. Here a survey type of research is undertaken with the help of research assistants who are involved in the design, translation and completion of the questionnaire in the field; this includes in-depth interviews with government sponsors.

In addition to the principal investigators, the Kanita research group also comprises several research affiliates who are full-time members of the academic staff of the School of Social Sciences but contribute on an *ad hoc* basis. They may assist in supervising students in the field and contribute papers for Kanita's workshop or the Kanita journal called *Kanita Papers*, but their contributions are entirely on a voluntary basis. Foreign researchers or exchange students (from other universities) may be affiliated to the research group, if they are directly involved in an aspect of research that deals with women, youth and children.

The technical administrative tasks of the research group are generally undertaken by the project assistant, who is mainly responsible for supervising the clerk/personal assistant and the driver, the maintenance and upkeep of the resource centre, the office, the project rooms, and the log book for field transport. The project assistant is also responsible for the collection of secondary data for Kanita's resource centre and the compilation and indexing of the bibliography for the resource centre. Finally, the project assistant is ultimately responsible for coordinating the quarterly progress reports and budgets submitted by the different research components within Kanita.

Researchers and research assistants work with their respective principal investigators in establishing contact and rapport with members of the community, government officials and voluntary bodies. Although the major part of their time is spent in the field, they are also responsible for the collection of secondary data, the compilation of progress and project reports and for undertaking other relevant duties. When a research assistant works with students, he/she is also concerned with the on-the-spot training of students in community service and community work.

From time to time, principal investigators or affiliates may undertake academic research in the field of women, children or youth for the preparation of papers or as partial fulfilment for a Master's or Doctorate programme. Principal investigators and affiliates who do so make their reports and findings available to the Kanita research group and the material is stored in Kanita's resource centre and made available to interested academics and students within the School of Social Sciences and the university.

Meetings are held as often as possible to ensure the smooth implementation of current and future activities. The Dean, other interested academic and administrative staff members of the university, and relevant government officials are invited to these meetings. In this way, a kind of monitoring control system is developed, when the project's activities are discussed and reviewed, in the light of the project's goals and university and government policies.

Latihan Amali Student Training Programme

Perhaps a significant change in the organisation of the Kanita programme is that the study service component is now subsumed under the newly proposed compulsory *Latihan Amali* Programme (Student Training Scheme) organised for all Social Science students within the School, whereby students are accredited with eight units when they submit a graduate exercise (*Latihan Ilmiah*) at the end of the fourth or final year in the university. Kanita will, however, assist students who wish to fulfil their *Latihan Amali* requirements by doing a study service or community service kind of programme. The study service principal investigator in Kanita will provide supervisors for these students with Kanita's training materials for study service, as well as holding lectures, seminars or workshops. Students reports provide Kanita's resource centre with guides for developing suitable field work methodology and techniques in community work. Kanita also assists the university in administering its Study Service Voluntary Corps (*Bersama Desa*) in the selection and training of students for the programme.

Study Service Programme

Kanita's study service attempts to provide university students with opportunities to apply the theoretical content of education which they have learnt in the classroom to the practical and material problems of community development at the local level. It also strives to create an awareness amongst the student community of the needs for civic consciousness and voluntary service which will enable them to take up responsibilities as citizens of the nation. In this way, students would be able to contribute meaningfully to national development and academic research by undertaking constructive action-research oriented projects in the context of the needs of the population through the mobilisation of local resources, manpower and a spirit of self-reliance.

IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

It appears that the Kanita Project has had the effect of developing greater awareness and concern for the needs and problems of women, children and youth in rural areas. This is seen in the response of students, researchers and government officials, in planning project activities that would reach this sector of the community more effectively. It is also manifested in the way in which local government officials have devised new techniques of communication that would enable women and youth to understand and conceptualise government programmes and project implementation procedures in a better way.

A preliminary evaluation of the study service programme was undertaken in 1981, based on the first group of students who participated in the scheme in 1979-80. Radical changes were seen in the students' intellectual and mental development. Firstly, the students appear to have been shaken from their tranquil, innocent existence to a world of painful reality. The poverty they experienced gradually sharpened their knowledge and understanding of the ecological, social, economic and political circumstances of Malaysian farmers in North Kedah. Secondly, they developed a keen objective perceptiveness towards ideas of social justice and equality. Study service students were keen to develop programmes and strategies that could restore and improve the spirit and optimism of the villagers, leading them to think about problems collectively rather than individually, so that a stronger leadership base could develop and spur the villagers towards self-reliance and cooperation. Thirdly, the villagers themselves became more aware of their problems through discussion and dialogue with the students, and were more encouraged to express what they felt to be some of the more serious problems they faced. A few schemes suggested by the students to solve some of these problems, such as collective savings for school expenses using the traditional saving system of *kud* (or *kutu*), family development guidance for women, and the organisation

of school transportation, proved to be immensely successful. The students' foster parents were also encouraged to visit the university and it was apparent that they were impressed and inspired by the achievements of the students. They expressed the need to motivate and encourage their own children to aspire to higher education. It was obvious that the direct exposure and involvement of villagers in the university's activities helped to reduce their ignorance of the outside world and gave them a better understanding of the achievements of others through formal and informal education. Fourthly, the development of mutual concern and empathy between villagers and students inculcated a sense of permanent cooperation between them. Students, in particular, appeared to be constantly concerned with the problems of their foster parents and the villagers and paid them unofficial and social visits whenever they could.

Finally, and most important, students needed to be developed mentally and socially before their full potential could be discovered. They had to be exposed directly to situations of poverty and be more intensively involved with the problems of people whom they cared for, before they could develop a sense of dedication and commitment to the problems of the poor. The value of the study service programme was revealed in the opportunity it provided for this important learning experience. It facilitated the development of leadership qualities which would enable students to undertake administrative, research or field-based careers with greater confidence and understanding. Though students may have had to spend time gathering data for their various research reports, while providing community service to the villagers, the experience itself developed in them a new social conscience and a new, strong sense of social ethics and morality.

Participating Research Programme

Kanita's Participatory Research Programme focuses on the problems of certain communities in the State of Kedah, with particular emphasis on the identification and solving of problems related to the roles and status of women and children in a rural Malay environment. A researcher spends much of his/her time in the village in which the research is being carried out, backed by a principal investigator and the rest of the Kanita team based at the university. He/she collects data, supports the initiation and implementation of projects, and attempts to contribute to the development of a more aware, dynamic and self-regulating community. The concept of participatory research challenges the idea of "research" as being something monopolised and framed by academics and professionals, and instead underlines the necessity for the local community to be involved fully at all levels and at all stages of the research.

The emphasis is on the provision of opportunities for villagers to articulate their problems, particularly concerning women and children and their physical and social development, and to initiate processes by which they can be solved. The researcher is therefore part anthropologist and part community worker. Through an understanding of the community in which he/she is based comes a facility to encourage and mediate in formulating most appropriate plans of action and developing projects most beneficial for the community. It must be emphasised again that the researcher does not conceptualise the problem or direct solutions independently: this is done in a group, in the village, with the local people. It is on them that the organisation of any project will fall; it is on them that the identification of problems properly rests. The researcher will if necessary mediate between them and relevant government agencies until the two can successfully communicate independently; he/she will also be responsible for the provision of information about resources and alternatives so that decisions made are in the best possible manner. Ideally, he/she strikes a balance between voicing

information and pointing out possibilities. It is a process of enabling rather than leading; it is not the aim to make the villagers in any way dependent on the researcher. On the contrary, through assisting villagers in community programmes aimed at solving such problems as water shortages, low educational and health provision, and low land productivity, villagers may be able to develop enough leadership and internal dynamics to become self managing in the future.

To date, the Kanita team has experienced and experimented with different facets of participatory research, and gained considerable insight into the development process and the situation of rural communities. It would appear that participatory research has potential in Peninsular Malaysia not so much in terms of creating or accelerating radical changes in the existing socio-political structure, as of providing a congenial psychological base for the right kind of local-level leadership qualities to emerge. The research process has been shown to have a catalytic effect on leadership development which may have positive consequences in enabling village problems to be resolved more swiftly and effectively. The presence of the researcher and his/her continuous involvement in the problems of the villages suggested that a village leader should have similar priorities. In a situation when the village leader was too involved in personal or political activities outside the interests of the community, the limitations of this type of leadership were gradually made obvious to the villagers. This engendered a new kind of awareness amongst the members of the village - a more critical, aggressive and competitive spirit in which mediocre leadership based on self-interest will be unable to command a hold over the villagers for long.

However, the limitations of the participatory research method have been discerned in the context of Malay rural society. The existing political structure encourages the perpetuation of a formal leadership system which is greatly dependent on the bureaucracy for assistance, guidance or information about new, more innovative development strategies. With grass-roots leaders being nominated by the bureaucracy and being given ascribed statuses that guarantee long-term accessibility to government benefits and services, it is likely that complacency and self-interest may be more frequently manifested than dedicated leadership based on community interests. The ideal strategy would be to change the system of leadership, by decentralising the powers of the District Office and transferring the responsibility to the people. If this is done, there would possibly be no need to introduce participatory research in rural areas in Malaysia and a system of checks and controls would naturally emerge in rural Malay leadership. Furthermore, a political party system which encourages both alienation and over-participation in development (depending on which party one supports) among groups of villagers reduces the villagers' ability to conceptualise and perceive problems on a regional basis or to view them in terms of more fundamental social issues. If the participatory research method is able to overcome such structural differences in Malay rural society, so that problems can be viewed in terms of broader, ecological, regional and social issues, rather than in terms of political values and spontaneous and situational decisions and ideas, the methodology would have a bigger impact on applied social research in Malaysia.

Furthermore, in uplifting the status and power of rural Malay Muslim women, participatory research has been able to provide new channels of social communication between women and men and between women and local government officials. Village women appeared to show greater confidence in expressing their needs and problems and devising plans to overcome them. But it was observed that, in determining changes, the task of transferring some of these opportunities to women necessitates a change of traditional social values relating to the status and power of women.

Married women, in particular, have a definite handicap when compared to unmarried women, since their domestic activities expand radically after their marriage. The status of an unmarried daughter in a Malay household is very different from that of a newly married woman, who is expected to play a more active productive role economically. The kind of labour provided by Malay women in rice cultivation, tobacco cultivation and rubber smallholdings, for example, leaves very little time and energy for communal, social and political activities. The problem here is not so much that men do not contribute towards economic labour, but that their economic productivity is mainly in specific labour-intensive and non-domestic tasks, such as ploughing, planting, rubber-tapping, building and construction. Women in rice areas are generally engaged in time-consuming and labour-extensive tasks such as transplanting, weeding, harvesting and threshing, but they also participate in tapping, poultry rearing, and the watering of plants in garden plots and fields. Over and above these tasks, women also manage other major time-consuming domestic activities relating to the fetching and carrying of water and firewood, cooking, cleaning, washing and child care. Men often lend a hand in some of these activities, particularly in the nursing and caring of infants, but the ultimate responsibility to see these tasks through is left to the females of the household. This implies that communal political decisions are normally left to men, particularly male elders.

Thus, not only does the formal political system encourage greater political participation by men than by women, but the traditional social system also skilfully excludes women from political participation, even if they were motivated to contribute. It frequently happens that women who actively participate in communal decision-making have husbands who are politically active or do not need to spend much time in economic and domestic pursuits, being relatively wealthy or having enough grown-up children to take over some of their tasks. This leads one to understand that rural elites and rural elders, particularly men, monopolise local-level politics, channels of communication with the government bureaucracy, and means for gathering authority and influence through effective leadership. Such social differentiation of roles between women and men makes the task of creating and developing innovative qualities amongst rural Malay women a very problematic one. Women's potential as community leaders may only be realised if the existing social hierarchical structure changes, giving women more time and opportunity for decision-making on the political level.

Again here, participatory research could have the effect of creating positive responses in women towards developing their potential in village-level leadership, but it is important that their traditional role patterns also undergo a radical change; otherwise they will be made to bear an added social and political responsibility. In this respect, Kanita's participatory research programme continues to strive towards the development of a stronger female economic base in the context of planning and implementing economic activities. This would enable women to acquire greater technical knowledge and skills in matters that affect their economic productivity and earning capacity, a situation which guarantees them a greater amount of economic independence and influence. This could elevate their social status in their society, which could enable them to select a wider range of alternatives and priorities in their lives. Only then would it be possible for women to develop a motivation and interest in wider social issues beyond the sphere of domesticity. Thus, the participatory research processes could create both a viable psychological base to trigger off new concepts and ideas in social relationships, and generate enough awareness to affect the structure of society. Local level responses should be energised into long-term strategies affecting social, economic and political policies.

As an external evaluation procedure, on-going evaluation is also carried out on the reaction of the female village population to Kanita's research programme and government community development programmes through informal discussions and observations. At regular intervals, visits are made to the project areas to gauge how change agents and people interact and with what effect. Two programmes have been selected for a more intensive assessment: the Family Development Programme and the Rural Health Programmes. Classes which are aimed at home improvements, learning of handicrafts, and education of pre-school children are evaluated in terms of degree of participation, social background of participants, and their motivation and opinions. In a similar vein, the attitudes towards health services, traditional medical practices, and nutrition programmes are being scrutinised among villagers. Administrators, teachers, health care personnel, and development workers are interviewed in order to assess how they view the programmes which they direct, and in particular how they themselves evaluate the effecting of changes to be brought about. Focus is placed on the features of organisation and the commitment of change agents. Questionnaires of a more formal character are used for this aspect.

In addition to these, week-long visits are made to the selected villages, whereby, through a sharing of community activities, impressions are gathered about the feedback of government-implanted changes. Ideas are formulated with respect to the structural constraints impinging on planned action, the image of government bureaucracies, and the quality of participation. Through the various study methods, ranging from fixed questions to participant observation, an evaluative picture is constructed which may help to understand the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to assist women within their own conceptualisation of desired social change.

This external evaluative procedure has also elucidated similar problems in the villagers', particularly the women's, understanding of community development. It is apparent that formal government development procedures aimed at rural communities overlook real needs of villagers, particularly of women, in terms of the kind of technical or vocational training required and non-formal educational facilities and services.

Thus, community needs projected by the Government through Community Development Programmes do not necessarily reflect needs of villagers, particularly women and youth, and are not necessarily crystallised in the village though the need is apparent. In addition, they do not necessarily succeed in "community building" or "development", i.e. creation of a self-reliant, cooperative society responsive to local, regional or national needs and goals.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

As explained earlier, the internal evaluation procedure in Kanita is undertaken by the use of specific social indicators that are considered to be appropriate for rural Malaysian women and youth. In both the structured evaluative survey and informal depth interview methods, the evaluative team placed emphasis on *form of participation* (more specifically, form of local involvement in projects) and *leadership development* as the most significant indicators to show the effectiveness of the community service methodology used.

The initial results of the evaluative exercise demonstrate that conventional government community projects are less able to tap locally felt needs than community service "action-oriented" programmes like study service and participatory research. Community action programmes also achieve better

success in developing and creating awareness, interest and motivation in formulation of effective plans of action to overcome immediate physical and social problems.

In study service, for example, villagers have actually begun to learn new techniques and ideas in development, methods of group or community organisation and re-organisation, and implementation procedures that can effectively bring about socio-economic changes in a constructive way. They have also begun to discover limitations in existing venues of communications and knowledge and to undertake steps to remedy the existing weakness in the communication and information systems among members of the community and between the villagers and the Government. Furthermore, the instilling and creation of interest and motivation in children, who are inspired by the interest of others in their own intellectual and psychological development, is an additional catalyst to informal learning and socialisation.

Participatory research has had the effect of diverting women's preoccupations away from domesticity and religious activities towards issues that are related to their economic and social advancement, through improving formal and non-formal educational activities and informal technology training. The psychological effects of in-depth and intensive learning and understanding of problems have a significant catalytic effect on leadership development, particularly charismatic leadership and participation in community affairs, which would have long-term beneficial effects on the people if the researcher's leadership is subtly underplayed and transferred to relevant local personnel; this appears to have been done in Kanita. The research process has also provided a move towards self-reliance whereby villagers work out their own priorities among problems and resolve them according to their own time schedules and constraints. Finally, because of the interest in and sensitivity towards village problems of outsiders (researchers), women and youth have been able to develop greater confidence and self-esteem in seeking and developing their full potential in local economic and political activities.

However, it is apparent that community action programmes like those implemented by Kanita are subject to several constraints, mainly of a social, administrative and political nature. Much of this has to do with the actual status of academic institutions in implementing applied social research that has consequences for policy direction and change.

CONSTRAINTS OF THE PROJECT

Generally, the limited numbers of skilled research personnel, administrative and financial constraints by the funding agency, and the university's conservative policy towards integrating applied research into the formal teaching curriculum have prevented the research team from expanding its activities in a wider direction. Furthermore, it is obvious that the micro-procedures of both study service and participatory research have not the same far-reaching effects as Government Community Development Programmes (in terms of target population and area coverage) unless the methodologies are formalised into programmes in both the university and government agencies. Stability and continuity are not granted unless universities and the Government realise the potential of college and university students, academics and applied social researchers as effective agents of change. Kanita's status as a research programme within NACIWID may help to overcome some of the problems mentioned above, though it may be necessary to continue to maintain neutrality and autonomy in its organisational structure and implementation. Thus, if political considerations are given priority in resolving the problem of the poor, the overall philosophy and objectives of the programme may not be realised.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is obvious that a programme like Kanita's has tremendous value in contributing further knowledge and experience in the field of research on women, children and youth. It would, however, be important to expand upon the existing areas of research, to include neighbouring states like Penang, Province Wellesley and Perak, to ensure that the data and findings have a greater comparative base in Malaysia. It may also be necessary to have a bigger input, in academic research on women, youth and children, in areas which have been under-researched, particularly in relation to problems of female land ownership, land alienation affecting women and youth, work behaviour and working patterns of women, the notion of work productivity in men and women, and the development of female leadership; these areas of research have hardly been attempted in any significant degree in Peninsular Malaysia and would significantly facilitate programmes like Kanita that focus on non-formal education.

Finally, the integration of research programmes on women should be given consideration, whether they be administered from universities or government agencies,to enable researchers to exchange ideas and learn more about appropriate methodologies and techniques of research in the field of women. NACIWID, as a national integrating and advisory body, may well serve this function, and it is possible that Kanita may play a more positive role in drawing research groups together for this purpose. It is only in this way that non-formal educational techniques can be suitably developed and formulated into effective community action programmes that serve to benefit women, children and youth in Malaysian society.

(Study prepared by Dr Wazir-Jahan Karim, Convenor, the Kanita Project, c/o School of Comparative Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Minden, Penang, Malaysia.)

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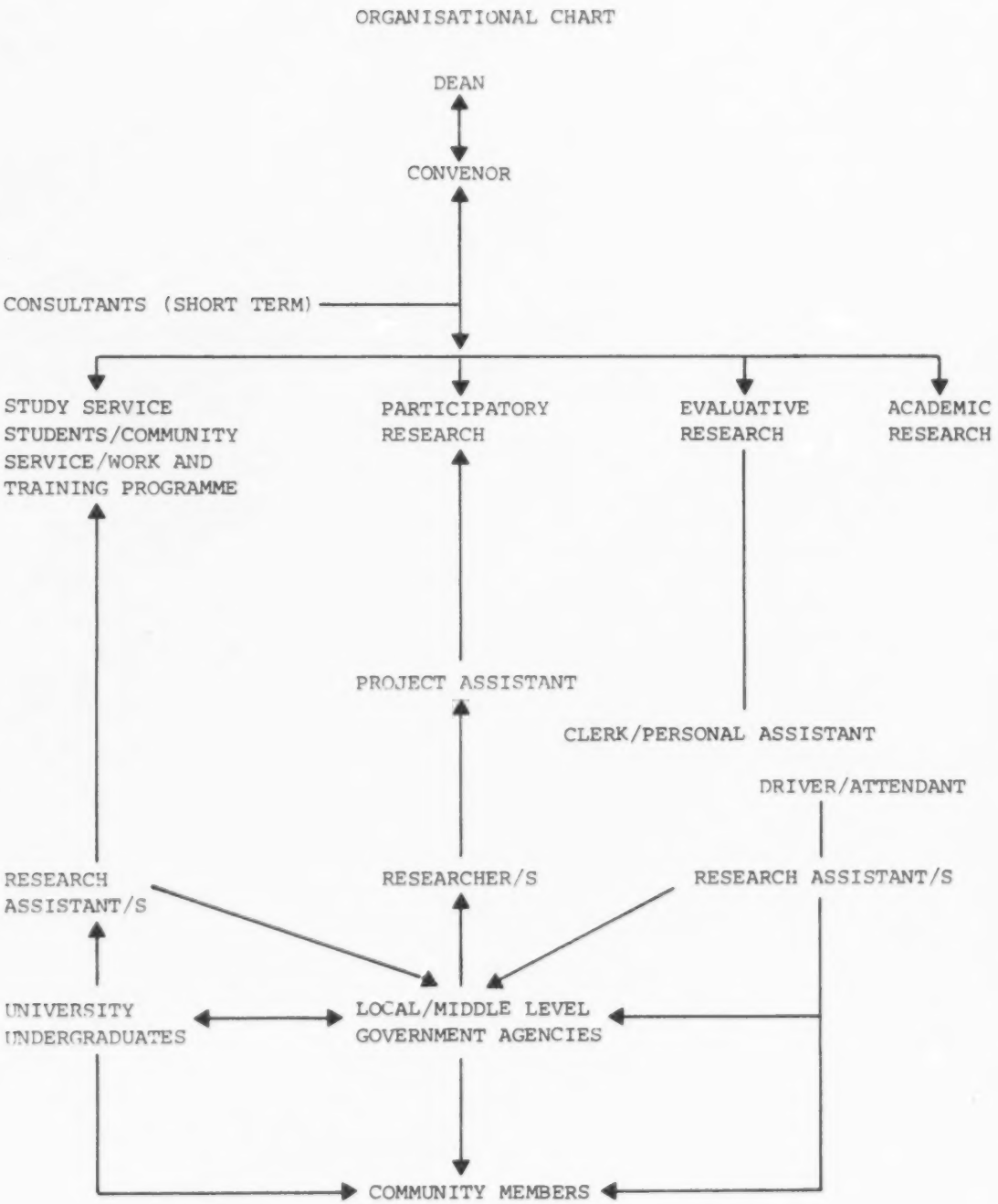
CHART 1


ORGANISATIONAL CHART
DEAN
CONVENOR
CONSULTANTS (SHORT TERM)
STUDY SERVICE STUDENTS/COMMUNITY SERVICE/WORK AND TRAINING PROGRAMME
PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH
EVALUATIVE RESEARCH
ACADEMIC RESEARCH
PROJECT ASSISTANT
CLERK/PERSONAL ASSISTANT
DRIVER/ATTENDANT
RESEARCH ASSISTANT/S
RESEARCHER/S
RESEARCH ASSISTANT/S
UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES
LOCAL/MIDDLE LEVEL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
COMMUNITY MEMBERS

GLOSSARY

If an abbreviation only applies to one country, the initial of the country is in brackets after the abbreviation.

AID	Agricultural and Industrial Development
BARD (B)	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
BRAC (B)	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAB (SL)	Common Amenities Board
CMC (SL)	Colombo Municipal Corporation
DIE (I)	District Institute of Education
DPO (B)	Deputy Project Officer
DSI (SL)	Department of Small Industries
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
ICAR (I)	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
IDA	International Development Association
IRDP (B)	Integrated Rural Development Programme
ITI (I)	Industrial Training Institute
IUCW	International Union of Child Welfare
JWP (B)	Jamalpur Women's Project
KCS (B)	Krishak Cooperative Societies
MMA (I)	Madras Metropolitan Area
MMDA (I)	Madras Metropolitan Development Authority
NACIWID(M)	National Advisory Council on the Integration of Women in Development
NSS (I)	National Social Service
RSS (B)	Rural Social Service
SEWA (I)	Self-employed Women's Association
SWR (B)	Swanirvar (self-reliance) (Movement)
TCCA (B)	Thana Central Cooperative Association
TNSCB (I)	Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board
TTDC (B)	Thana Training and Development Centre
UDA (SL)	Urban Development Authority
UNFPA	United Nations Federation for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VERC (B)	Village Education Resource Centre
WWF (I)	Working Women's Forum

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Printed and published by
The Commonwealth Secretariat

May be purchased from
Commonwealth Secretariat Publications
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HX

ISBN: 0 85092 283 6

Price: £4.00

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